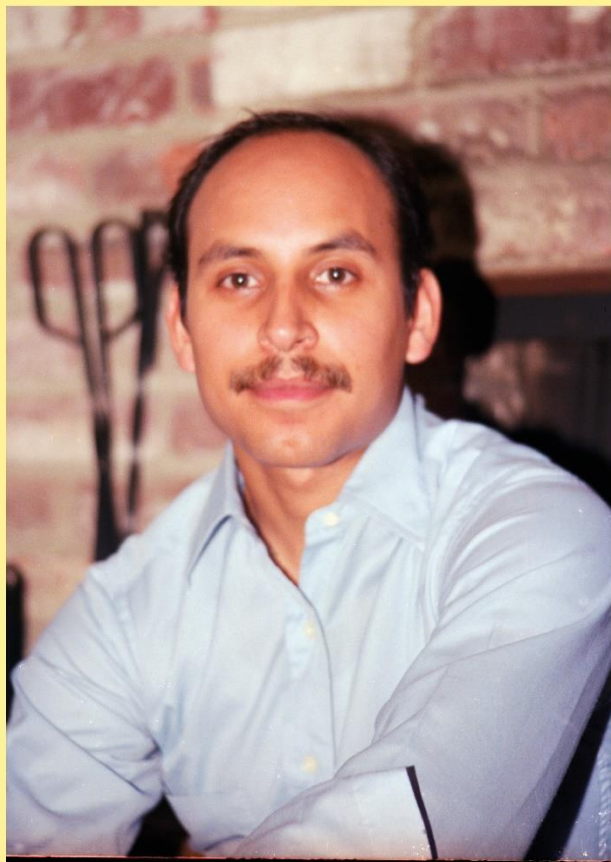


Howard Gilbert Wood

AutoBiography

(1959 to 1999)



*Compiled and Edited
by Howard Gilbert Wood
Teignmouth, England*

Updated: March 9th 2021

Howard Gilbert Wood

Son of Howard E. Wood & Nancy Lopez

Father to: Robert, Seth, Isaac, and Elijah

*Wives: Nancy Dawn Dougherty * (m. 1985-1986)*

Helen Elizabeth Euinton (m. 1999 - present)



In 1959, Howard Gilbert Wood was born on the 9th of August in Salt Lake City, Utah. He was born to Howard Edwin Wood of Salt Lake City, and Nancy Lopez, of Sacramento, CA.

After serving in the Air Force, Dad & Mom moved to Salt Lake City, Utah, and stayed with his parents. This was the house on California ave. It was here, that their first son, me, was born. I was to by the name of "Howie" for the next 11-12 years.

Dad soon hired on at the US Post Office in Salt Lake City. We lived in Salt Lake City for about six months.

By this time, three of Grandma Wood's brothers, and her oldest son, had moved to Southern California: Bill, Elmer, and Bob Greenhalgh, and Jack Wood. My dad was soon to follow, then Mother and I did the same.





Howard's hospital baby picture

DESERET NEWS

Salt Lake Telegram

THE MOUNTAIN WEST'S FIRST NEWSPAPER NOW IN ITS 110TH YEAR

DESERET NEWS AND TELEGRAM, Salt Lake City, Monday, August 10, 1959

BOYS:

Mr. and Mrs. N. H. Culler, 88 R St.

Mr. and Mrs. Harold L. Harding, 556 E. 2nd South, Kaysville.

Dr. and Mrs. Robert Rush, 420-9th Ave.

Mr. and Mrs. Melvin Herrin, 843 E. 7th North, Sandy.

Mr. and Mrs. Mans J. A. Arndt, 528 W. Capitol.

Mr. and Mrs. Chester Kaski, 3559 South Holmberg.

Mr. and Mrs. Jack B. Wilhite, 2048 E. 3335 South.

Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Cooper, 321 W. 7th North.

Mr. and Mrs. Howard Wood, 950 California Ave.

Mr. and Mrs. Patrick Shummin, 21 Gray Ave.

Mr. and Mrs. Dan Carter, 1971 Richard St.

Mr. and Mrs. Stanley Logan, Draper.

Mr. and Mrs. M. W. Chadwick, 160 E. 2700 South.

Mr. and Mrs. C. C. Heid, 4840 S. State, Murray.

Mr. and Mrs. Earl L. Burnett, 514 N. 5th West.

Mr. and Mrs. John T. Cleland, 209 W. North Temple.

Mr. and Mrs. Carl Powell, 618 S. 9th West

Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth F. Atkins, 1608 W. 8600 South, West Jordan

Mr. and Mrs. Jesus Rodriguez, Midvale.

Mr. and Mrs. Don F. Hansen, 6542 S. State.

Mr. and Mrs. Malaquias Martinez, Lark.

Mr. and Mrs. Theodore Romo, 235 W. 6th North.

Mr. and Mrs. Harold J. Brown, 426 Hoover St., Midvale.

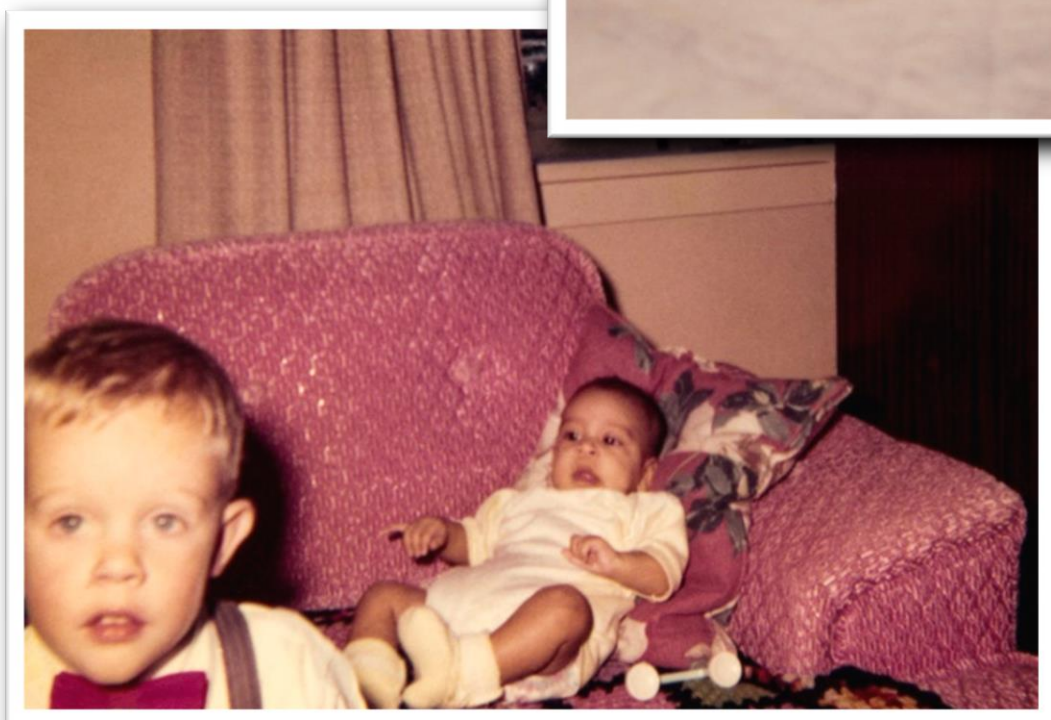
The Hospital bill

LATTER-DAY SAINTS HOSPITALS						
OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS						
PATIENT'S STATEMENT						
NAME WOOD MRS. NANCY				ROOM NO. 5W	ROOM RATE	ADMISSION NUMBER 39900
ADDRESS 960 CALIFORNIA AVE. C'TY				PHONE NO. 55897		
MEMO		POSTING DATE	EXPLANATION	AMT. CHARGED	AMT. CREDITED	BALANCE DUE
	1	AUG-9-59	PHARMACY	* 0.75		* 0.75
	2	AUG-9-59	DEL. ROOM	* 25.00		
	3	AUG-9-59	DRESSINGS	* 3.00		
	4	AUG-9-59	LABORATORY	* 2.50		
	5	AUG-9-59	PHARMACY	* 6.00		* 37.25
	6	AUG-9-59	ROOM TRIAL BAL	* 20.00		* 57.25
	7	AUG10-59	PHARMACY	* 1.85		* 59.10
	8	AUG10-59	ANESTHESIA	* 10.00		* 69.10
	9	AUG10-59	ROOM TRIAL BAL	* 20.00		* 89.10
	10	AUG11-59	CENTRAL-S	* 0.60		* 89.70
	11	AUG11-59	ROOM TRIAL BAL	* 20.00		* 109.70
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abs 40.00 *D. Satterguy*
 120.00

PLEASE KEEP THIS STATEMENT. Billing date shown is date item was posted to your account and does not indicate date service was rendered. Since there are many departments in the hospital from which charges may originate, it is virtually impossible in ALL cases to have the entire amount posted on this statement at the time of release. Therefore, should an additional charge come to you in the mail, we request your understanding and prompt payment.

LAST AMT. IS BAL. DUE unless otherwise indicated
 ACCTS. PAYABLE WEEKLY and in full upon departure



Moving to Southern California

Why California? By the time I was born, Dad's three uncles had already moved to Southern California. All three of them continued working for the Greyhound Bus company, as they did in Salt Lake City.

Dad's oldest brother, Jack, was the first to move to Southern California after their uncles had made the move. Jack, and his family moved first to Long Beach, then Hawthorne, and finally in a new home in the north end of Torrance. Seven years later Jack and his family would move to a very large house with a swimming pool, just a mile away.

In the early part of 1960, Dad made the journey to California alone and in a 1946 Chevy, which just barely made it, having a cracked block.

Dad's goal was now to start working, make money, and secure housing so Mother and I could make the move as well.

Dad, now in Long Beach, started working with his brother, Jack, doing landscaping, clearing out yards, and general garden and lawn care. Jack was working elsewhere, but when a "lead" came through, Jack would see the customer and give them a quote for job to be done Dad then did the work outlined in the quote.



*Howie as a toddler, at Uncle Jack's new home on 181st.
in the north end of Torrance*

About two months later, we took the Greyhound Bus to Torrance. The housing Dad secured was a one-bedroom apartment in the old section of Torrance (see photo). The house was about 6 blocks from Downtown Torrance.

Mom relates that on many occasions, I would roam up and down the ally-ways with my friend Joey Shradda. According to mom, I would at every chance I had, put on Dad's boots and if at Joey's, I'd put his dad's shoes on. On one occasion, I went strolling up and down the alley with Mr. Shradda's shoes on, only to have him come looking for me, because he somewhere to go.



1963 W. 222nd Street, Torrance, CA

Wendy would be born approximately a year later, and by then we would move just one block down the road into a small two-bedroom duplex (semi-attached).

The Move across the Road

Wendy's first home was at: 1921 W. 222nd street. It was a small two-bedroom duplex, with very nice polished hardwood floors. I do remember Mother using her Fuller dust mop, to keep those floors dust free.

The house we lived in was really small. It had two bedrooms and a rather small kitchen and eating area. One memory I can recall at this time, is when I tripped over the electrical cord of the coffee maker. The coffee spilt all over my foot. What pain -- the trip to the doctors seemed to take forever. I remember crying and mom trying to quiet me down by offering me some cookies with chocolate stripes on them. To this day I don't eat those cookies.







Downtown Torrance was 6 blocks away, and it was an easy walk with Mom. There was the J.J. Newberys 5 & 10 cent Store, Foster Freeze ice cream, and the Torrance Bakery. We loved all the small items for sale in Newberry's, including small pets, like those small fresh water turtles. Oh that creaky wooden floor!!

Dad always bought the best ice cream from Thrifty Drug store, like raspberry wave, and rocky road, however, we still love the soft ice cream in a cone from Foster Freeze.

Oh, how I loved vanilla, but when I was young, I couldn't pronounce my "V's so well. One time when I was with George on bikes, I had to order chocolate, to avoid saying "banilla", oh how I hated that chocolate ice cream cone If I remember, I "accidently" dropped the cone .



Days at the Beach



Oh, the many memories of going to the beach. Laying out on the beach with our beach sized towels. Going for a swim, and then coming back desperately wanting a lemon-lime soda to wash away the salt in my throat. Not that I kept my mouth open while playing in the ocean, but it had a habit of getting there anyway. Mom

always took us to Redondo Beach, right next to the Pier. Wasn't until our teen age years, that we went with our friends. I know not many places have beaches, let alone where it is warm & often very hot.



Dad's gardening business and work trucks

Constantly, since then, Dad has done gardening for the next 50 years. As I'm writing this history, Dad is now retired. Dad started his business with an older Chevy truck. He then bought a brand-new Chevy truck in 1970. The cost was about \$3,000. It was a nice one ... an orange truck with some nice interior bits. That truck lasted many years. It must have been in the early 90s, when I gave Dad the truck I had bought a short time earlier from our neighbour, Simon Sandoval. It came with a huge camper on it. Toot it once to Hemet Lake, and spent the night. Mark & Sonia, with their 3 children also came It was nice. I then traded Dad trucks with a Ford Truck I had bought from Uncle Jack.

Dad had an old greenish-blue Chevy truck. It was a manual three speed and the sounds that the transmission used to make really was amusing to us children. As it would hum, we likewise would make that ever so loud and lively sound.



Dad's truck was very similar to this one.



Dad's 1970 Chevy truck he bought new for \$3,300

Below: Kara, and Cousin Jenny





*Can't remember if this was a neighbour,
or someone from the '76 gas Station.*

Right: Camper truck I bought from a neighbour, and eventually gave to Dad.

Below: Green Ford truck I bought from Uncle Jack, and eventually gave to Dad



Memorial Day Parades



The annual Torrance Armed Forces Parade started somewhere downtown and then went up Cabrillo Ave., and Carson St. and then up Torrance Bl.(shown in the photo to the right).

We would walk the six blocks to get a nice spot on Carson St, right near Cabrillo Ave., right near the Chinese restaurant, Ding How.

It was such a blast to see the servicemen in their different uniforms, and tanks rolling down the street. I particularly loved the marching band, with the drums and brass instruments, and the horses. Always loved the horses.



The Measles, Mumps, and Chicken Pox

One Christmas morning, Wendy and I both woke up with the Mumps. On another occasion, Wendy and Mark both woke up with the Chicken Pox. The next year, we all shared the Measles.

It was on a Saturday morning when Mom took me & Wendy to get our Polio jab. Once there, I got my jab first, but when it was her turn, Wendy decided against having

her jab, they had to catch her first. She ran behind chairs and under tables. Whether she had the jab or not, I don't know, all I remember is her running all over the office. We had no other vaccines, just the polio. We just went through the natural process of having those childhood diseases, and are the better for it.



A Few Memories, and the Move Next Door

When Mark was born, we moved next door, 1917 w. 222nd st, to a larger two-bedroom house. Mark and I shared bunkbeds, and Wendy had her bed opposite ours

On that moving day, it was late and I remember seeing the television show "Gilligan's Island". We had dinner about what seemed to be about 8:00pm and watched T.V. on the portable T.V. trays. We thought that that was a nice treat. I remember Mark's crib, so he must have been still very young.

. We had a small backyard in which to play. In addition, there was an alleyway just to the side of our house. We had a nice quite neighbourhood, and we played outdoors till mother called us in for dinner.

Mom's #1 rule: "No snacking after she put the kitchen light on".

I would also roam the alleys with Georgie Williams. Come Saturdays, we would go hunting so very early in the morning with our wagons -- hunting for hidden treasures that others had thrown away.

I recall, when Mark was a bit older, Mom and Dad ordering a set of bunk beds for us boys. Mark turned out to be a “rocker”. Mark couldn’t go to sleep without rocking back and forth on his bed. He had the bottom bunk, and I recall countless nights with the bed rocking back and forth. The rocking lasted perhaps 20-30 minutes.

On Saturday, Sears delivered our long-awaited refrigerator. Mom noticed it had a scratch or some kind of mark on it, and Mom made them return it and give us a new one without scratches or marks. Mom wasn’t afraid to stand up for what she wanted.

My favorite, was my red wagon. I used to ride that wagon everywhere, up and down the sidewalks, and taking the turns as fast as I could. We soon had got our first bike, with training wheels, of course. One day, Mom helped me learn to ride the bike without training wheels. As you do, she was pushing me and let go without me knowing Off I went, and have enjoyed many bikes since.

In that same larger 2-bedroom house, we also had a nice polished hardwood floor. One afternoon, and I don’t remember where Mom & Dad were, Wendy and I decided to tack down the new area rug that Mom & Dad had just bought. Why did we do it?? Together we hammered at least 20-30 tacks, with me doing the hammering, and Wendy handing me the tacks.



This reminds me of the time our two hamsters got loose, we never did find them. In that house, we had a cat for a short while, two Guinea pigs, one of which we gave the name Henry to, only to find out he was a she, so we named her Henrietta. In addition, we had a medium size tortoise named touché. We lost him one winter, did think he was hibernating under the front porch. Much to our surprise when he made his appearance that spring.

“Most Mediterranean breeds are biologically set to hibernate for a period of time; it is unnatural for tortoises to be awake and eating 365 days a year”.

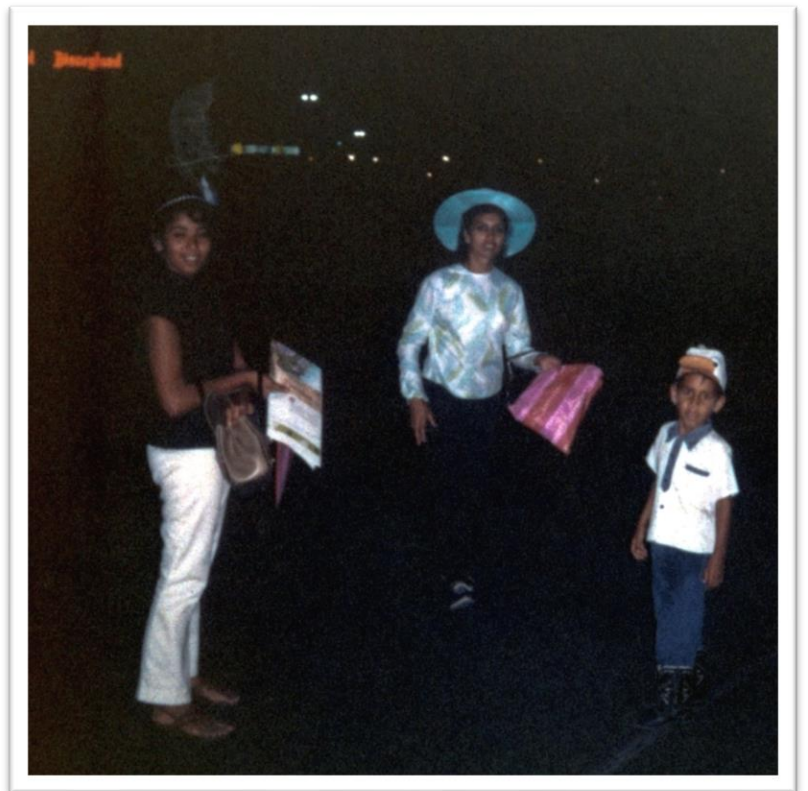
Fire in the house

I don't think I'll ever forget I almost set the house on fire. It was one Saturday morning, and I was looking for something under Wendy's bed. It was a bit dark and I could see as clearly as I wanted, so I got some matches and proceeded to light one. Having that lit match in hand I could now see much better. However, there was some cotton lining hanging down from the box spring. Well, that caught on fire, and before I knew it, in rushed Mother. She flipped that mattress & box spring on end and swatted that fire out. Lesson learned for me, but Wendy most likely smelt the aroma of burnt cotton for a while.

Trip to Disneyland

1965 – On one occasion I remember going to Disneyland with mom and Cousin Priscilla.

Likewise, we would visit them in Sacramento quite often. What fun I had. Going to Setter's fort and the Zoo as well as many visits with the extended family.



On the Bicycle

For my 8th birthday, Mom & Dad gave me a new Schwinn bicycle, and I would often give Wendy a ride. We rode up & down the block, and around the block.

One afternoon, however, while giving her a ride, Wendy let out a scream and the bike came to a skidding halt. Wendy had gotten her foot caught in the spokes of the back wheel. I remember exactly where it happened, about 30 yards from our house.

Luckily, we had a nurse living in the house right next to us. Mrs. Turner, was an elderly lady with white hair, quite nice and had a southern accent. Well, Mrs. Turner brought Wendy in her house, and I remember her wrapping Wendy's ankle up with one of those elastic bandages. I'm sure it was minor, because that's the last I remember of the mishap.



The Helm's Bakery Truck

I remember the Helms Bakery truck stopping in front of our house many times. We loved the wonderful aroma when those back backdoors were opened.

The Bakery stopped the trucks in 1969, so we had the last couple of years' worth before it all ended.



"The Helms Bakery was a southern California fixture for decades, from 1931 to 1969. Their slogan was "Daily at Your Door" and their products were delivered throughout southern California by delivery wagons packed with fresh loaves of bread, donuts, cookies and cake."

Church

Being members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, we had two meetings each & every Sunday. Sunday School was 1 ½ hours in the mornings, and in the afternoon was Sacrament Meeting, also 1 ½ hours. Primary was held on wednesday afternoons.

Our walk to Church took all of 10 minutes. We lived about 4 blocks away and only had to cross one street. It seemed as if every sunday was a sunny day. It was a glorious walk with both Mom & Dad. Sometimes after Church, Mom & Dad would take us to McDonald's for lunch. No *Happy Meals* back then.

Our Ward building was truly a building to remember. In addition to our regular church meetings on sunday & wednesdays, we also had the occasional ward dinners, plays, sports, and Christmas time bazaars*. At those bazaars would be craft items, homemade gifts and baked goods.



The Torrance 1st Ward building, at the corner of Cabrillo Ave. & 220th St.

*** A bazaar is a tradition to do a bit of fundraising, and to get folks in the holiday spirit.**

Primary Songs

Below are a couple of songs I know Wendy loved to sing. The junior Sunday School room was a huge double room, in which we met for Sunday School & Primary*.

Sunday School & Primary*.

Book of Mormon Stories

"Give," Said the Little Stream

1. "Give," said the lit - tle stream,
2. "Give," said the lit - tle rain,
3. Give, then, as Je - sus gives,

"Give, oh! give,
"Give, oh! give,
Give, oh! give,
give, oh! give,
give, oh! give,
give, oh! give.

"Give," said the lit - tle stream, As it hur - ried down the hill;
"Give," said the lit - tle rain, As it fell up - on the can - yons;
Give, then, as Je - sus gives; There is some - thing all can give.

I know, but wher - ev - er I go, The fields grow green - er still;
small, I know, but wher - ev - er I go, The fields grow green - er still;
raise their droop - ing heads, As it fell up - on the flow'rs,
as the streams and blos - soms do: For God and oth - ers live.

Chorus
Sing - ing, sing - ing all the day, "Give a - way, oh! give a - way."
Sing - ing, sing - ing all the day, "Give, oh! give a - way."

Deuteronomy 16:17
Acts 20:35

Winds: Fanny J. Crosby, 1820-1915
Music: William B. Bradbury, 1816-1868. Arr. © 1989 IMI

Book of Mor - mon sto - ries that my teach - er tells to me
sies met oth - ers who were seek - ing li - ber - ty,

an - cient his - to - ry.
ant - ed to be free.

far a - cross the sea,
we must broth - ers be.

lived righ - teous - ly.
live righ - teous - ly.

Joseph Smith—History 1:34
Articles of Faith 1:8

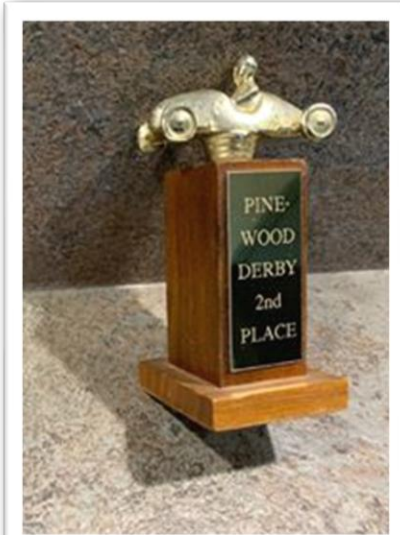
**** “primary helps children feel heavenly father's love for them, learn and understand the gospel of Jesus Christ, feel and recognize the influence of the holy ghost, and prepare to make and keep sacred covenants. primary is for children ages 18 months through 11 years.” LDS Church***

Cub Scouts and My best friend George Williams.

Good ol' Georgie. We first met in the 2nd grade. We attended Torrance Elementary School. Together, we ate pizza at Straw Hat Pizza Parlor, went swimming, combed the alley-ways for good things people had thrown out, and finding any wild lands or creeks to explore. Georgie's mother, Doris, and father, George were older and very nice.

Georgie's mother was also a Den Mother, and so we had our weekly meetings over to their house. His dad had built the home, and had a special covered patio, that we used for the meetings.

Georgie also had a two-story fort, that his dad had made. The Pinewood derby, one year was great ... Georgie got first place, and I got second. This wasn't just our Pack, but we met at the Boy Scout Troop's hall, that they used.



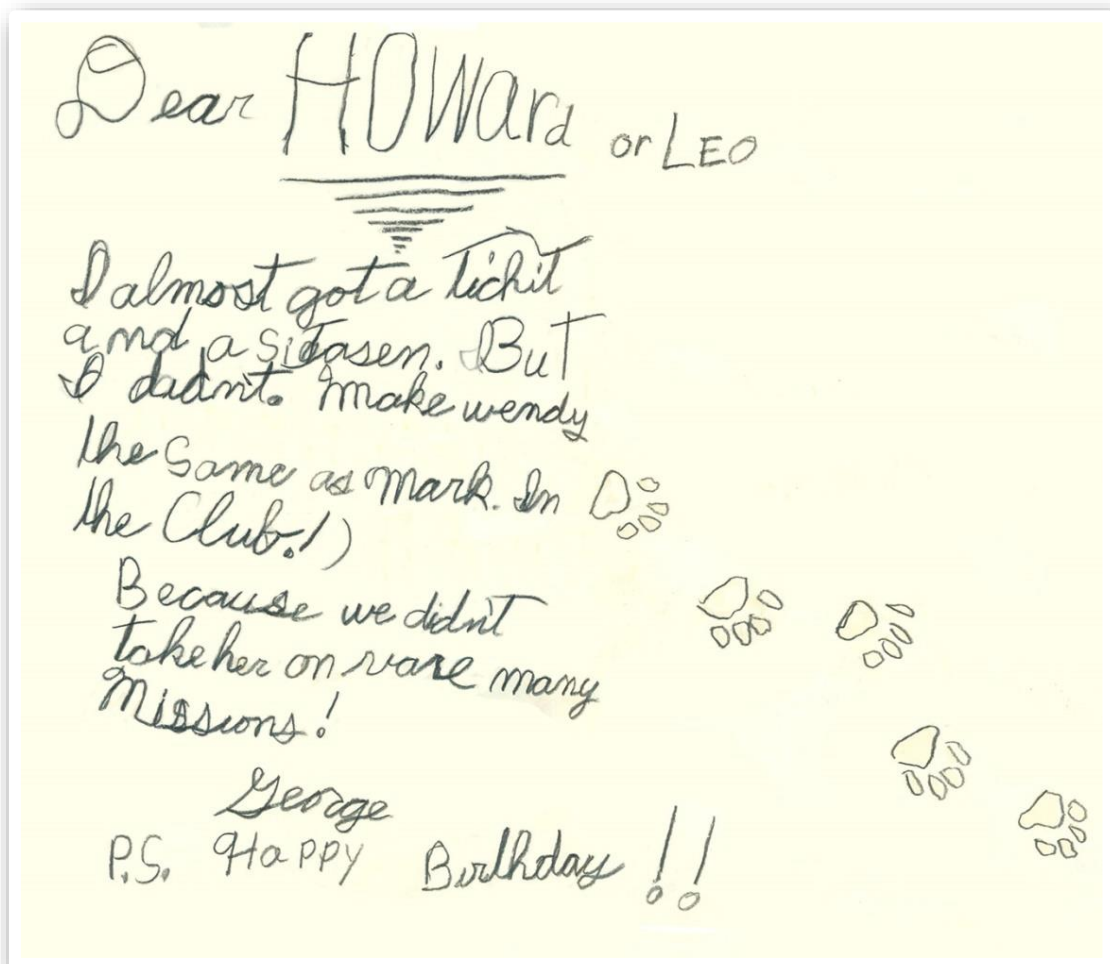
On a few occasions, however, Wendy & Mark did go swimming with me and my best friend, George. There are photos of Wendy & Mark at the tide pools, and at George's birthday party.



Wendy, Mark, Howard, George, Ray, George's mother, and Martin

George and I had a "club", with a theme of wild cats, such a leopards and lions. Notice George's leopard print vest, Mark and I had one as well.

George's dad had built a grand two story fort for George. In that fort, we cooked toast, hot dogs, toasted cheese sandwiches, etc., all with a hot plate. In the letter below, George proposed making Wendy a member of our club!!



School

Torrance Elementary was the school we attended. It was about a mile away, and we enjoyed the walk to school. I say we enjoyed the walk, because we never really minded the walk.



Torrance Elementary School

I remember the both us, and later Mark, walking to school during some of the thickest foggy mornings. As a short-cut, we would cut through a housing estate, down a steep dirt embankment and over the railroad tracks, then through the Torrance Park parking lot. Imagine!

I remember the beginning of one school year, Mom got us dressed in our new school clothes, with packed lunches in hand, off we went ... full of excitement, and some anxiety. However, when we arrived, there were no other children anywhere to be seen. We were a week early!!! Imagine.

One day, after school was over, Wendy had followed a couple of her friends as they walked home from school, only they didn't go home, but rather their afterschool day care. It was next to Torrance High School, which was about 5 blocks from our house. I don't think Wendy thought twice about being there doing art work, etc., but a teacher, who also worked at Torrance Elementary, knew who Wendy was, and followed Wendy's directions to our house. The center was just across the road from our Polliwog creek. She arrived in a new blue Mustang. How classy!! Wendy would have been in Kindergarten (age 5).



Torrance Elementary was an open air campus, that had many buildings, all connected with covered hallways throughout the whole school. This was such a blessing on those raining & scorching hot days.

On the occasional saturday morning, we would look for those red rubber playground balls that found their way on the roofs of buildings & the covered hallways. We would always find at least one ball. I must have thought it was a free for all if the balls landed on top of the hallways. We even tried our luck at Torrance High, hoping to find either a volleyball, basketball, or soccer ball. I don't think I ever told anyone this, other than writing this now in Wendy's biography. I was definitely under 10 years of age, and Wendy would have been 7 or 8.



Third grade school play –Age 8

Other saturday mornings, Wendy and I would often go down to polliwog creek. Why we gave it that name, will become quite obvious. The creek was about 5 blocks away, and we would find frogs, toads, their tadpoles and eggs. Never brought any creatures home though, and I'm sure mother was happy about that.

School basketball team

5Th Grade basketball team, Torrance Elementary School.

We played our games at Torrance High School. Remembering back, that free throw shot was Huge ... So far away. I feared the times I had to take that foul shot



Planning for the Future

While we were going to Torrance Elementary, the U.S. Government had a program to obtain a Savings Bond by buying Saving Stamps on a weekly basis. The school had a table set up in front of the school auditorium. We could buy Stamps for 10 cents, 25 cents, 50 cents, \$1, or \$5.

A full 25-cent booklet contained 75 stamps and was worth \$18.75, which was the initial price of a \$25 war bond. Thus, a full 25-cent booklet would be exchanged for a \$25 war bond with a time to maturity of ten years.



Savings Bond Stamps



After School T.V. show -- Dark Shadows

Wendy first knew about this new T.V. show, called *Dark Shadows*. Shortly after a few episodes, I too was watching it religiously.

I remember almost running home to see *Dark Shadows* on channel 7. It seems like we ran home, but I'm sure we didn't. We did, however, love this show. It had vampires, witches, warlocks, werewolves, time travel, etc ...



Dark Shadows was an American gothic soap opera that depicted the lives, loves, trials, and tribulations of the wealthy Collins family of Collinsport, Maine, where a number of supernatural occurrences take place.

Visit by Grandma & Grandpa Wood

It was in the summer of 1966 that Dad's parents came down for a visit. Grandma, whose maiden name is Greenhalgh, had three brothers living within 30 minutes of our house. Those three great uncles of ours were: Bill, Elmer, and Bob Greenhalgh.

The one memory I have of their visit is going to the Hostess Bakery. They had the day old stock of breads, and other baked items, and the prices were marked down. Well, what made it memorable is that we got lost.

Mom was giving directions to Grandpa as we drove, but in the end we all made it safely back.



Visit by Aunt Connie & Cousins

The year looks to be 1967 or perhaps 1967. What I like about this photo is that shows the front of our house.

Dad's in the picture, so we know it's a saturday afternoon or a sunday.

Wendy is just to the left of Dad, with me & Mark behind. Next to Aunt Connie is Theresa, and next to Mother is Stanley, Steven, Anita, and then Lisa (next to Mark)



1968 -- Aunt Mary Ann's wedding in Sacramento

Of the many weddings we went to, this is the one I've found, so far, with Wendy pictured. Being young while attending many weddings, while visiting our Sacramento families, was the running around the reception hall. There was always food & cake. The Mexican food was a bit of a treat because we didn't get it too often at home.



Front row: Sam, Wendy, Diego, Lisa Teresa, Mark, Marcie, Gloria, Anita, and Howard

Back row: Mom, Rita, Sarah, Connie, Leo & Mary Ann, Cecilia, Al & baby Lisa, Priscila, Stanley, and Steven

Visit by Grandpa Lopez

Most summers, in the mid 60s & early 70s, we would spend a few weeks in Sacramento. We always looked forward to visiting Mom's family. This included Grandpa Lopez, his children (mom's half brothers & sisters), and lots of aunts, uncles, and many cousins.

1968 – Grandpa Lopez accompanied us home on the train. It was an Amtrak journey home. Grandpa had his Train Pass, a perk for working for Southern Pacific Rail for so many years. As I remember, Grandpa brought a leg of pork with him. I can only imagine how Dad would have been so very happy to receive. Grandpa Lopez raised hogs, a cow, rabbits, and chickens.



SACRAMENTO, CA

Throughout the years, we did vacation in Sacramento a lot. It seemed like there was a wedding most every year. How we loved the wedding cakes, and the Mexican food. Both Aunt Connie and Aunt Cecilia had swimming pools, and nothing beats the heat in Sacramento as does a good swim in the pool. It was such a fantastic treat to be with our cousins. I'm not sure how to describe what fun it was, it seems with cousins there is an instamatic bond, at least that's what we felt.

Summer Trips to Sacramento

I remember, as a family, going to Sacramento to visit Grandpa Lopez and Big Carmen. We knew that our real grandmother had died a very long time ago, but we thought that Big Carmen was very friendly. Grandpa Lopez and Big Carmen had a large family, so, in addition to our older aunts and uncles, we also had lots of "younger" aunts and uncles, who seemed much more like cousins. Grandpa's youngest boy and girl were, in fact, the same ages as me and my sister Wendy.



1967 Summer trip to Sacramento

As I remember, only Damian and Stephanie were still at home, and I think uncle Tino (from Grandpa's first wife, has a room somewhere on the property.

On our visits to Sacramento, my mother, my sister Wendy, my brother Mark, and I would stay at either my aunt Connie's house, aunt Cecilia's, aunt Rosie's, or grandpa's house. For the most part I thoroughly enjoyed it all. I loved staying at Grandpa's because we got to see and be with him. Though his English was very limited, somehow we managed to communicate.

Grandpa had lots of chickens and rabbits in his backyard. Big Carmen really knew how to cook and I still can remember to this day the aroma of her fresh hot tortillas at meal times.

Grandpa also had the *Old House*, not too far away, that he had a cow, and some hogs. This was the house that had burnt down some years ago, but the barn and animal pens were still used by him. I remember on several occasions trying to milk the cow and feeding the pigs. The comforting smells of the animals, grandpa's vegetable gardens, his home, and himself as well – bring back many memories.



Priscilla & Vangie Menessis -- Mary Ann Lopez

A conversation with my Cousin Nu'unie.-- 2020

Nu'unie Meneses Chicken coops, rabbit cages, couple of cows, there were some pigs too, What a fun place to visit unless Grandpa put you to work. Great memories!

Like · Reply · 2w

Howard G Wood Milking the cow

Like · Reply · 2w

Priscilla Garcia Sr. the pump house....out house....hair bats...chickens without heads...great family kitchen table...smack dab in the middle of the kitchen. i can see grandpa sitting at the end with his head down resting on his folded hands.

Like · Reply · 2w

Howard G Wood Carmen's tortillas were absolutely the best ... and grandpa making eggs & chorizo

One time (1987) **Lydia** & I made some tortillas Carmen would have died laughing at our meager tortillas, but you know .. (most) anything you make by hand has that extra bit of goodness...

Like · Reply · 2w · Edited

like3

Lydia Meneses Baby Goats in the boys' room to keep them warm during spring, sliced oranges serviced up on a huge tray outside to the children, Priscilla's GramaCarmen's chunky fig preserves, piñata filled w/hard jelly filled candy wrapped in foiled, pink/white coconut candies... Yup, it's all about sweets! And I never ever could walk in the chicken coop barefooted... But I've seen it done. Ewwwww. And Dad made a take a bath ASAP, once we got home! Good times...



Grandpa's Ford truck was the same year & color as this truck

Grandpa's transportation was his old green Ford pick-up truck.

Mom and us children travelled to Sacramento many times during the summer holidays. On one or two occasions, grandpa came to visit us in Torrance, California. It was perhaps an eight hour train ride for him and one or two of his girls. When I look back at these trips to Sacramento, I get a sense of family -- and how enjoyable it was to get together for meals whether at a home or a park.

After returning home from my mission, in the fall of 1980, I spent some time with mom, in the town of Pleasanton, CA. Mom and I did visit grandpa and we spent several days with him. Grandpa had some photos of his childhood and his early family life. So I copied them and shared them with other family members in Sacramento.

On one occasion, my cousin Anita Mora and I spent some time with grandpa -- asking him questions of his childhood and coming to California etc... Trying to remember what we learned, I can't recall much at all -- not only did grandpa speak in Spanish, but he was quite old and not fully conversant. I remember him saying something about *Indians*, but that's about it.

Visiting Our Cousin Larry Meneses

In 1966, we visited our Cousin Larry Meneses, who was in hospital. While serving in Viet Nam, Larry had suffered an artillery hit, that injured his back. This injury caused severe damage to his spinal cord, leaving him paralyzed from the waist down.

Larry was being hospitalized at the Long Beach Memorial Hospital.



Front Row: ***Gloria & Larry Meneses, Wendy Wood***

Back Row: ***Nancy Wood, Marcie & Cecilia Meneses, Becky***



***Grandpa & Carmen Lopez,
Howard & Nancy, Cecilia
Meneses, Gloria, Wendy,
Marcie, and Becky Wood***

SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH

1966 – The summer we visited Dad's family in Salt Lake City.

I do remember a bar-b-que at Aunt Kay's house, and I recall venison (deer meat) being on the menu. Uncle Larry and Uncle Ron were game hunters. I remember us children playing in the basement of Uncle Ron's huge old house, not far from Grandma & Grandpa's home on California Ave.

Two cousins, in particular, were Wendy's age: Tiffany Rutherford, and Laurie Wood. Aunt Kay had four daughters: Tiffany, Jennifer, Melanie, and Mindy. Uncle Ron's daughter, Laurie was his only daughter. Uncle Dick had two daughters: Debbie, and Jennifer.



1st row: ***Grandpa & Grandma, Wendy, Laurie, Tiffany.***

2nd row: ***Mark, Howard.***

3rd row: ***Kay, Mom & Dad, Jeff, Helen & Ron***



***Mom and our Aunt Kay
(married to Larry Rutherford)***

Visiting Dad's Uncle Bob

1969 – These photos are at Uncle Elmer's house.

All three of Grandma Wood's brothers lived very close together in Orange County. Perhaps 25 minutes from our house in Torrance.

We would visit Dad's uncles fairly often. Uncle Bill had a huge salt water aquarium, with the most fascinating fish.



Front row: **Wendy, Uncle Bill's daughter, Ginger (?)** Back row: **Uncle Bill, Mom, Aunt Viv (Uncle Bill's wife), Cousin Holly**



Front row: **Bonnie Greenhalgh (Uncle Elmer's wife), Cousin Jill, Mark, Wendy** Back row: **Jackie Greenhalgh (Uncle Bob's wife) w/ someone's daughter, Grandma Wood, Cousin Holly, Mom**

Uncle Jack & Aunt Gloria

Our Uncle Jack & Aunt Gloria's house was only about 3 miles away. After moving to the north end of Torrance, they would only be about a ½ mile away. We spent so many afternoons and evenings at their house. We loved swimming, then laying out on the cement, and playing Ping pong.

Over the years, we had many Thanksgiving dinners at their house. We could count on Aunt Gloria's turkey dinner w/ the trimmings and her signature oyster turkey stuff'n.



Front row: **Jill & Holly**
Back row: **Uncle Jack & Aunt Gloria. Jackie. & Beckv**



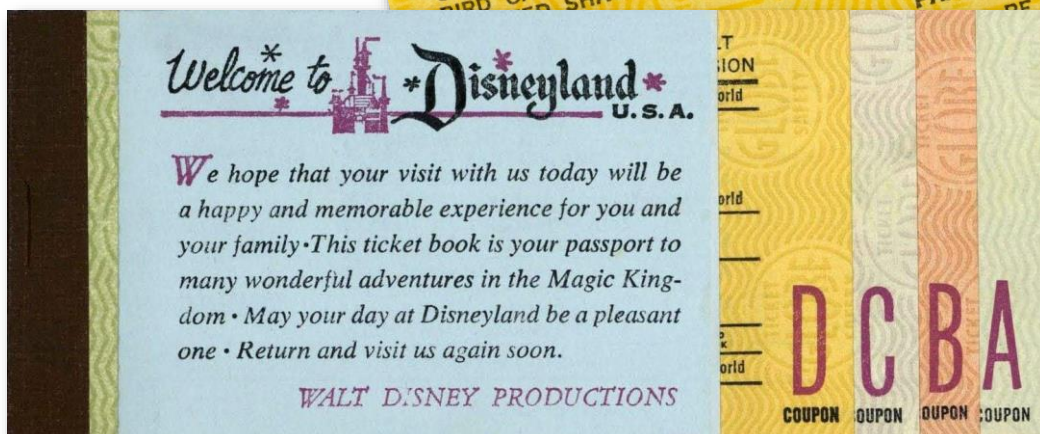
Front row: **Howard, Mark, and Wendy, Becky, Jill**
Back row: **Mom, Jackie, Uncle Jack, Holly, & Aunt Gloria**



Local Amusement Parks

How fortunate were we to have both Disneyland & Knott's Berry Farm within 30 minutes of our house. In addition, we also had Marineland just 15 minutes away, and Magic Mountain about 45 minutes.

We did, as a family, frequent these amusement parks maybe once a year. Knott's more so because it was free to get into the park, and you could then buy tickets as you needed them. When cousins would come to visit us, going to Disneyland was always going to be on the agenda.



Easter Sundays

It seems like Mother had made it her mission to make sure we had new clothes and pictures for Easter.



Food Mother made

Here is a list of meals I remember Mother cooking for us. I so wanted to make sure this facet of our lives were covered.

Roast Beef – It was on Sundays that we would most often have a huge Chuck Roast. The beef roast looked to be 1 ½ inches thick and about 12 inches square. Mom would have mashed potatoes and gravy from the drippings.

Tacos – yes tacos were a treat when mother would make them. We didn't have the hard shell Americanized version of a taco, but the soft corn tortillas light fried just enough to get them soft. I can almost smell the aroma of the ground beef and tortillas. Yes we had Spanish rice as well. Not sure if we had burritos, I don't remember them.

Pasta Bake – Mother would brown the small shell or penne pasta first, then add the canned tomatoes and spices then let it simmer for a bit before letting it rest.

Stuffed Bell Peppers – This dish was so lovely, having Spanish rice with ground beef baked in the green bell pepper & covered with cheese.

Liver – On occasions liver was on the menu ... not unpleasant at all.

Banana Squash – This meal was my least favorite. Enough said.

Ground Beef w/Gravy – The gravy was fantastic, I we did love our mashed potatoes.

Tenderized Stake – Mom or dad would have the butcher run the large steak through their mechanical tenderizer. It must have been a much cheaper cut of meat, but was quite tender.

Spaghetti – Our most favourite meal. We had the plate of spaghetti with the sauce poured over the center. I know a lot of people have the Bolognese style, where you mix the sauce with the spaghetti before serving.

Potatoes Au Gratin –This was a dish I gradually learned to love.

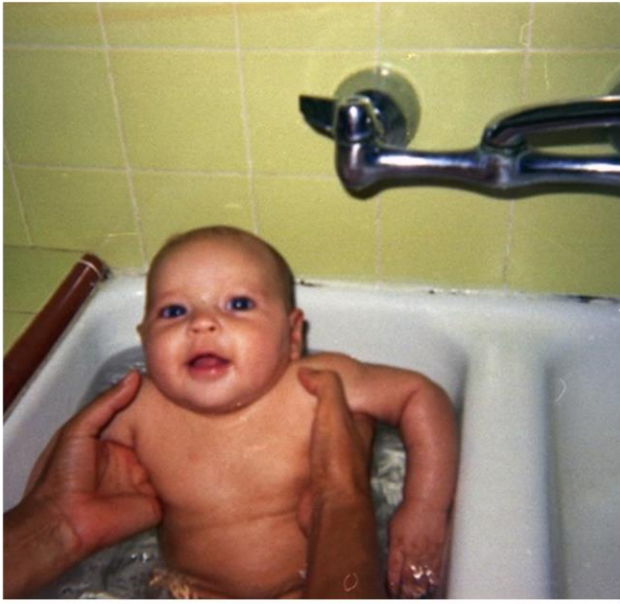


Banana Squash –I remember the dreadfulness I had when I saw this on my dinner plate. I did grow to tolerate it

Biscuits –from the Betty Crocker all purpose mix

Wednesdays have always been spaghetti for dinner. In our teen-age years, Wendy and I would take turns making the spaghetti dinner. We never used jars or packets, but used a large tin of whole tomatoes, two smaller tins of tomatoes sauce, and a small tin of the tomato paste. I used the hot Italian sausages, and Wendy liked using the sweet sausages. This arrangement did work quite well. We always had chores to do, and we alternated days doing the cooking, setting the table, clearing the table, and washing the dishes.

MOVE TO NORTH TORRANCE



Kara Ann Wood was born May 9th 1971. Kara had great set of lungs, she was very loud, and we could hear her crying when we first entered the Hospital for the first time. We just had to follow her cry.

Thank goodness, Wendy and I were old enough to appreciate a little baby. I was 12, and Wendy was 10. I do have some specific memories of Kara as a little baby.



Boy Scouts

Boy Scouts always played a big part in my teen-age years. Charles Pia was our scoutmaster. We did lots of hikes, and campouts. The Silver Moccasin, a 53 mile hike, was a mile stone for our troop.

Earning merit badges was an education. I

purposely went to libraries in Torrance, Gardena, and Lomita to find the particular merit badge book that I needed study the requirements, and prepare to pass off those requirements. I achieved the rank of Eagle Scout in my junior year. In addition, I earned the extra awards, called bronze palm, silver palm, and gold palm.

I really give thanks to Dad for his support and my scoutmaster, Bro. Charles Pia, for the time he spent with us. It was definitely an important chapter in my life.

Throughout my high school years, I always participated in track and cross country. Looking back, at those many, many hours of practice was a good experience. One learns discipline and hard work is so very important in life. I don't know for sure, but my success in school work may have been due to my participation in sports, scouts, and church activities.



Two week leadership camp at Lake Arrowhead.



AUG 73



L»R: 50 mile Silver Moccasin Hike Back row- Ron Mitchell, Bro. Mousseau , John Godson, Steve Brunswick. Middle row- Rennie Rollins, Howard Wood, Lamont Mitchell, ?, David Wilson. Front row- Gary Woodruff, and Greg

School fights

1st fight – 3rd/4th Grade – *Johnny Johnson*

2nd fight – 7th Grade – *Greg Sandoval*

3rd fight – 8th Grade – *Random football player on the opposite team.*

Near fights, that I can remember

Year 2015 -- *with neighbour re: fence*

Year 2016 -- *with car driver re: walking in front of him*

Church Softball

Photo to the right is our 1973 softball team.

I played for our Ward team, from age 13 to 17.

My regular position was Pitcher. I was smaller than the older boys, but I was rather good as a pitcher.



*Back row – Jeff Woodruff, Philip Farr, Ron Jacobs, Soloman, Bob Galardo.
Front row – Howard Wood, Ron Mitchell, John Goodson*



This is our 1975 Stake Championship Softball team. We did go Regional Finals, but lost the very last game to the Lakewood Stake Champions.

Church and youth activities really played a big part of my life, and the life our whole family.

I so loved the stake dances. We always had live bands. Sure, some bands were better than others, but we never complained.

Besides the dances, our Priest Quorum had lots of activities. Grant Clark, and Jonn Claybaugh were out priest quorum advisors. With Grant Clark, we did an overnight campouts in Palm Springs, and a State Beach.

Jonn Claybaugh had just recently returned from his Mission in Argentina. When I left for my Mission, Jonn gave me his suit that he had bought on his Mission.



Wendy was the Laurels' President
L»R: Jamie Dechamplain, Wendy Wood, Phillip Farr, Cherie Morgan, and Rachel Morgan.

SPECIAL GIRLS IN MY YOUTH . . .

Teri Clayton



We didn't date, but it was the dances that we seem to make time for each other. The reason for not dating or going steady, is that we both were still a bit young. I was 14, and Teri 12 years old.

Those the "slow"dancing" that was so memberable. Two songs stand out as being favorites: Stairway to Heaven, and Color my World.

Darilyn Tracey

Boy, did I have a crush on her a girl named Darilyn Tracey. Darilyn was in her first year at North High, while I was in my 3rd year (Junior Year). She lived just a couple of blocks from me. As time went on, I found myself eventually carrying her books home from school, as well as mine, by the way. And, let me tell you, I always had a lot of books. I used a gym bag to put them in. I could only do this during the off season of track and Cross-country. Otherwise, practice went on till 5pm or so.

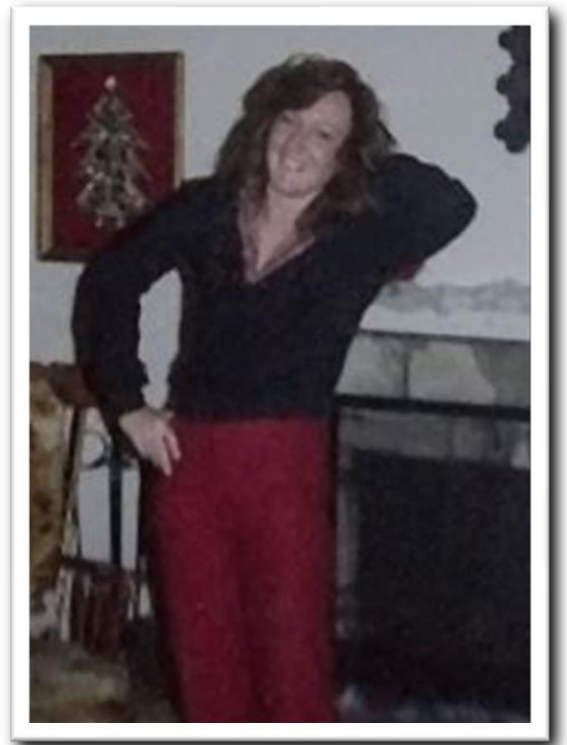


Jenny Mantecon

Jenny Mantecon was my first serious girlfriend. She was a close friend of Wendy. This was during my junior year in high school, so I was 16.

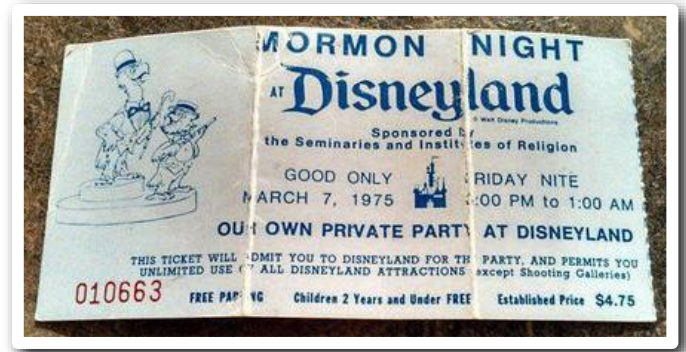
Jenny and I spent many lunch times together. We used to meet up for lunch behind the science building. It was a large grassy area, quiet and secluded. This was a very special time for us, a bit of one-to-one happiness during the school day.

Jenny was one letter writer, seemed like a long letter every-day. I've scanned the letters that have survived the past 40 years.



Double dating with Wendy

Wendy and her close friend, Jenny Mantecon, had arranged a double date to Disneyland. Wendy was dating Keith Hawkes, and I found myself taking Jenny to Disneyland. *I'm sure there was a bit of closed door chatter, between Wendy & Jenny, leading up to me asking Jenny.*



We then had a few more double dates together. Two were just dinner, and one was a dinner & movie.


On one particular double date, we had dinner in the southern part of Torrance, also known as *Riviera Village*. Nestled next to Torrance Beach & Redondo beach, there were lots of good eating shops and restaurants. Where & what we had for dinner, I cannot remember. But what I do remember is where & what we did afterwards ... I conversed with Jenny just four years ago (2016), and she also remembered that night very well.




Keith had driven us to a very remote area of Rancho Palos Verdes, just 20 minutes from where we had eaten. So we parked. Keith & Wendy had left Jenny and I alone in the car, then some 20 – 30 minutes later, with windows extremely steamed, they came knocking at the door. That's all that I'll say, other than nothing beyond kissing went on. Without any previous arrangements, Jenny & I then took a walk and left Keith & Wendy alone. How barren the countryside seemed at night, all open fields. Looking back, I wonder if Wendy & Jenny didn't plan it all along.

I remember the ride home so well, I felt sick to my stomach, not from the guilt of making-out, but from Jenny's blasted cherry flavoured lip gloss ... I guess I could only take so much of it ...

In total, we probably went together for about 9 months.

FaceBook Messenger conversation –Feb 2nd 2019


**Jennifer Mantecon**
Active 2h ago




13/02/2019, 09:17

Ah ha Was it not in 1976, or there abouts, they "we" went to Disneyland I think it was a "Mormon Night at Disneyland" Yes, good times they were and good times ahead ... looks fun, & I hope to make it to Torrance this summer ... Disneyland here I come..


13/02/2019, 14:34

Yes indeed! Mormon night at Disneyland...\$8 for an all day pass! That's certainly changed, holy cow it's expensive! It's been a blast and so much fun watching my grandkids discover Disneyland..❤️

13/02/2019, 16:40

How fast time flies, but so many beautiful memories remain...I remember kissing in the back seat to "Oh what a night, late December back in 63, oh what a very special time for me, oh what a night" Bring back any memories?

13/02/2019, 19:18


**Jennifer Mantecon**
Active 2h ago

Oh yes, "what a night" just had some other memories pop into my head Eating lunch together, on the grass, not far from the science building --- what seemed like a hundred letters you sent me, no email, iMessage/texts , just old fashion letters going through the post office --- and being together at El Nido park one day, your soft sweater/top and the lovely perfume (White Shoulders ??) you wore Ditto Jeans & Bear Trap shoes/sandals

Isn't funny, that I can't remember what I had for dinner two nights ago, but some of these memories seem so real and like yesterday ... there is something about one's first love.

Here's me rambling on I look forward to being a grandfather in the near future (I hope). I don't want to rush my 18, 17, and 15 year old boys, but time is passing into adulthood for them.

14/02/2019, 14:48

Oh my goodness, now that's a great memory...Can't believe you remember the Bear Trap white sandals. Wendy got hers first and then I just had to have a pair. I visited Torrance yesterday. Nothing's the same. Houses, people and traffic everywhere..Went by El Nido and the cemetery we used to hop the wall at night on. Ate on the pier at Hermosa Beach and cruised Palos Verdes...Visited the house I grew up in...

Terri Ruth



My Junior year was fantastic in so many ways ... and my Sunday school class was no exception. Terry Ruth was our teacher ... I'm guessing Terri was about my cousin Jackie's & Ken Mitchell's age, that being about 5 years older than me.

Terri was not only glamorous, but was able to captivate us and we all just loved being in her class.

On one occasion, how I'm not sure, but she promised to take me out for pie at Marie Callender's (which was

the premier place for great pie). So one night, she came by and picked me up and off we went for some pie. I don't remember much about the pie, but after we left and was in the parking lot, Terri asked me if I could drive a standard transmission. Terri had a red Fiat, her Pride and Joy. I said yes, though my experience with a "stick" was very limited. So in I went behind the wheel, and with some effort I backed out of the parking space, going downhill a bit, I luckily didn't roll into the building behind us. So, we then toured the North end of Torrance and I was really getting the feel for the manual transmission. It was a fantastic evening, thanks Terri.

A few years later, as I was preparing for my mission, I attended a Temple preparation class, and to my surprise, Terri & her fiancée was also in the class. It was a few classes spread over once a week, for about 4 weeks.

A few years later, after my mission, Terri had developed cancer. It was aggressive, and Terri eventually died. Before she died, we had talked several times about my dating Nancy, Terri was a good sounding board and offered some good advice. Terri was like an older sister.

Some 30 years later, and I can still hear her voice. I will always miss Terri, and will always be grateful for having her for a friend.



HIGH SCHOOL

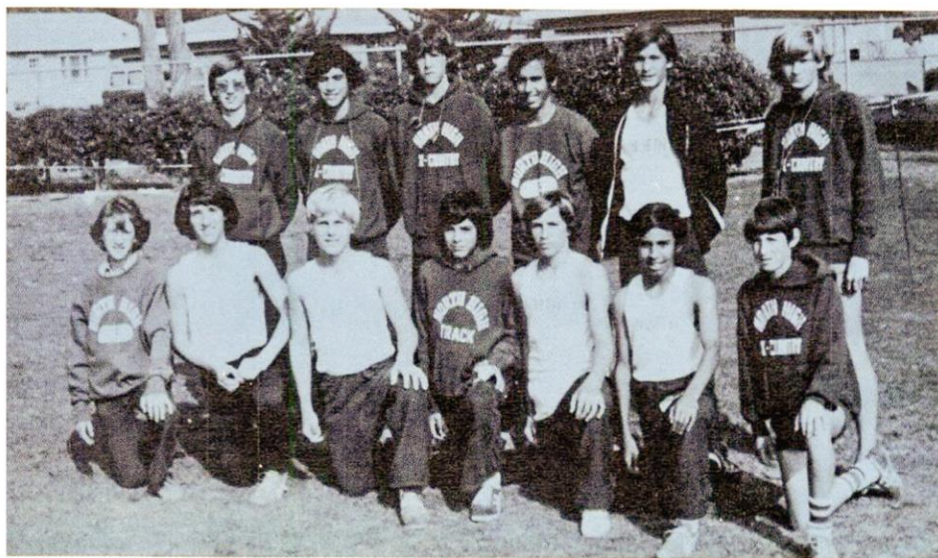
Cross-country / Track

Running cross-country & track for North High

School, was a fantastic experience. Gruesome workouts Running to the beach and back .. some 4 miles each way ...



Varsity (L to R) Fr. Top: V.Engen, Cch. Kasten, J.Pacheco, H.Wood, T. Gualterri, M.McAuley, J.Burgasser, G.Lance, J.Soto.



1974 Sophomore Team

I've got so many awards, but that was all part of it, I loved to do good. I was never the first or second best in cross country races, but always in the top 7 in competition. I ran all four years of high school. While writing this sentence, I'm still

friends with Greg Lance (top picture front & center).

In addition to long days at school, I was also very busy with Church callings, and young adult dances Friday nights.

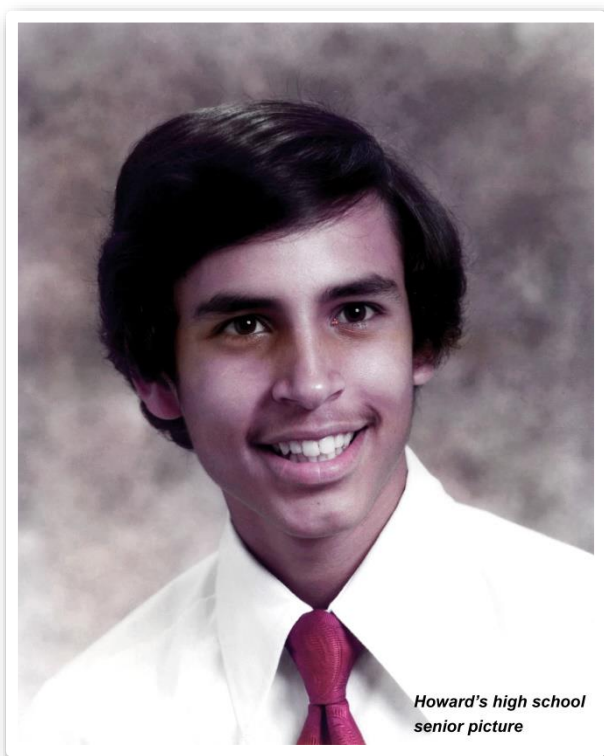


Latin Club

During my senior year, the Latin Club went to New York for the annual convention. We stayed in the student dorms, at the University of Rochester. I loved the chocolate milk at the cafeteria, on campus. Since I never have like the taste of milk,

this was a big deal to me, most likely to Mom & Dad as well. One of our trips was to Niagara Falls, a tour of the Eastman Kodak company, and a Marineland, in Ontario, Canada.

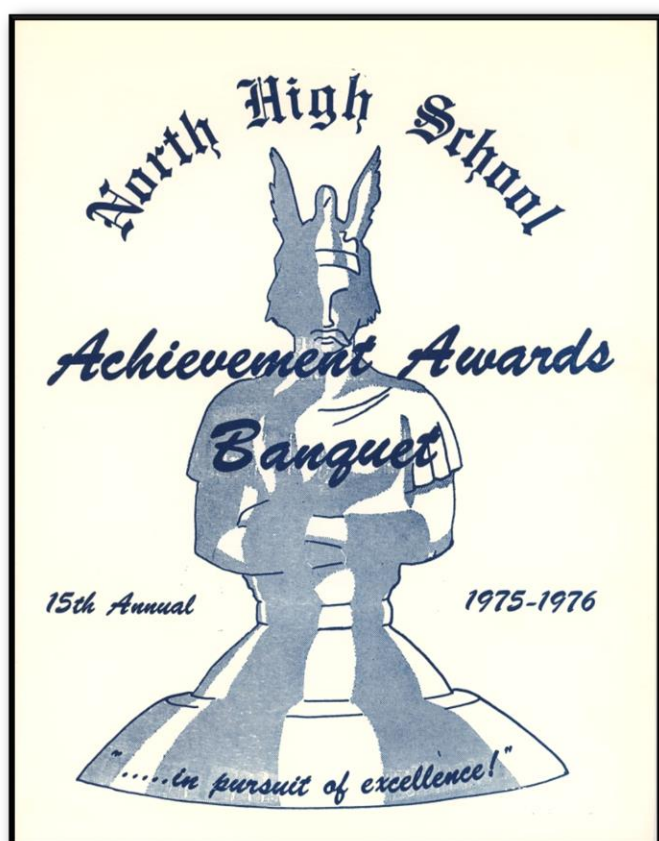




June 1977, graduation day
from North High School.

Never did well in my English classes, but my favorite subjects were math and the sciences. Biology, in particular was my favorite. I took two years of Biology, one year of Anatomy/Physiology, and four years of math, which included: Algebra I, and II, Trigonometry, and in my final year I took Calculus. My grade point average was 3.4, which is a solid B, and going towards a B+. Didn't go to many School Dances, but I do remember two 1950s themed dances ... the good ol' Sock Hop. I do feel, at times, I was born 25

years too late.



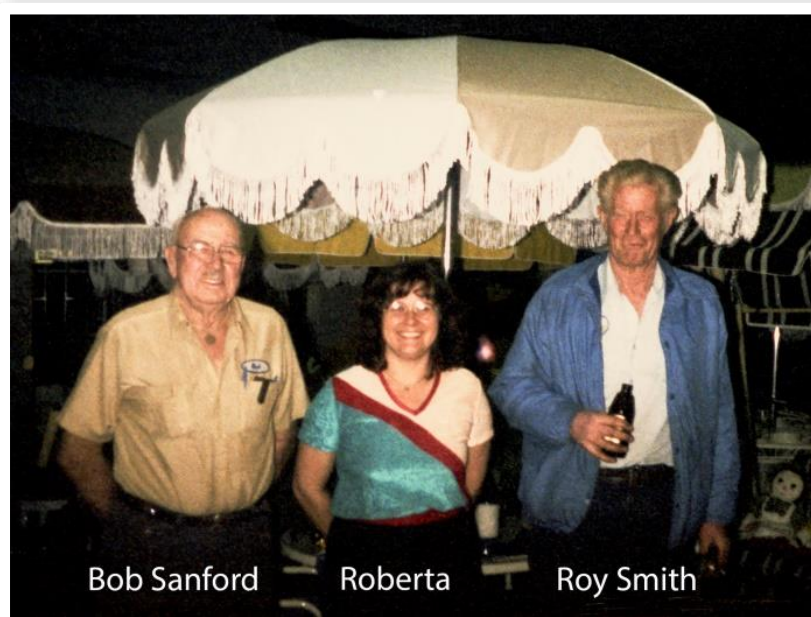
North High Latin students Achut Reddy, Michael Valenzuela and Howard Wood claimed honors at the California Junior Classical League convention held this month at Hoover High School in Glendale.

Reddy, a sophomore, won second place in first year Latin vocabulary. Valenzuela, a junior, won second place in level three Latin grammar and second place in dramatic reading.

Wood, also a junior, finished third in the 440-yard run of the convention's Olympic games.

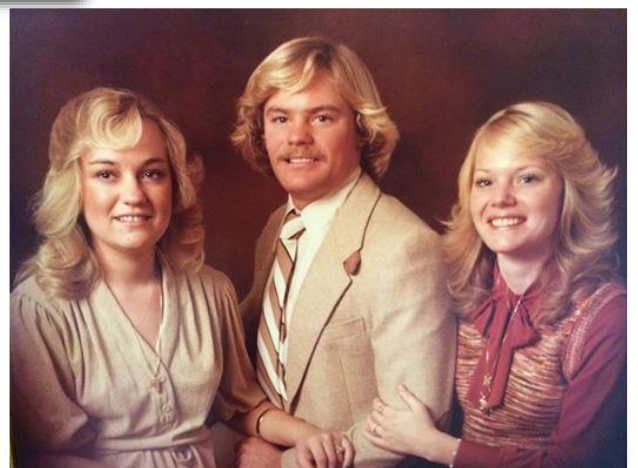
My First Job.

My first real fulltime job was at Jafco Swimming Pool Supply. My Uncle Jack was working there as a salesman. I rode my bicycle there most all the time, sometimes I would run the 5 miles. I did everything from putting together bar-b-ques, patio furniture, bottling chlorine and acid, stocking shelves, running the fork lift, delivering customers' patio furniture or bar-b-ques, working with Bob Stanford to repair pumps and motors, and selling the furniture and bar-b-ques on the sales floor. I got 2% of the selling price, and my \$7/hr wage.



I worked here at Jafco for about a year, saving about \$2,000, which I used for my mission. That was the plan, but little did I know, Dad just left the money in the bank and sent money himself.

Gil Archambear's children: Melanie, Marc, and Randi.



Dating in Dad's 1970 Chevy truck

1) **Karen Wilson:** Beatlemania (1978); The Hollywood Pantages Theatre



2) **Julene Smith:**

Went to Marie Callender's for pie

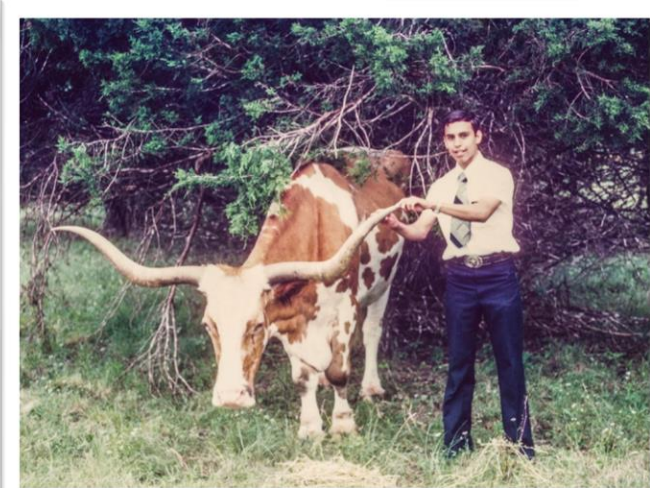
After picking her up at her house (235th & Crenshaw Bl.), we were heading towards Marie Callender's on Crenshaw Bl. Approaching the 190th St. intersection. The truck died, while in the left turn lane ... so Julene and I pushed the truck .. Thinking back, she must have done the steering We jiggled a battery wire a bit & it was no problem after that

1978 – 1980

Two Year LDS Mission



I was called to serve in the Texas San Antonio Mission, from Oct 1978 thru Oct 1980. I reported to the Salt Lake Mission Home. My group was the very last group going through, for the MTC, in Provo would be where all the missionaries would go. In the Mission Home, we learned lots in those 5 days.



My first area was in McAllen, Texas. I was an English speaking Elder, while most all the other Elders were Spanish speaking. My very first baptism was Rosie Cano.

I was assigned to areas in Austin, Cuero, Del Rio, Austin (again), Temple, and San Antonio. I have two volumes of my mission journals, they are at Dad's house.



***Rosie Cano, my first baptism.
Elder Lani Hatch was my 2nd
companion – McAllen, TX***

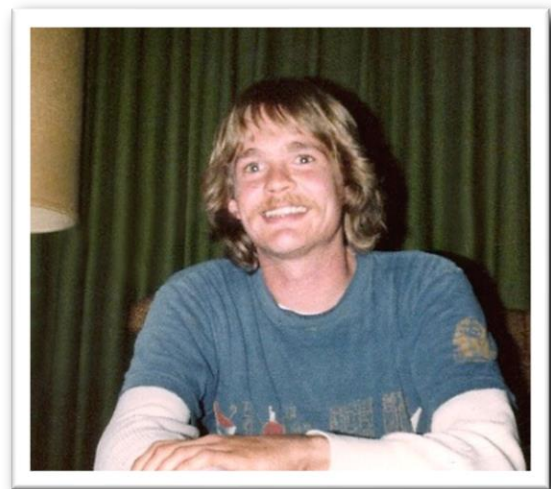


I took the Amtrak train home. The Mission President, Harold Pratt, and his wife took me to the train station, about 4am, and waved good-bye. Off I went for a three day ride home.

President Reagan was running for President, and I was wearing a Reagan Campaign button on my suite coat. It was so nice to be home. My little sister, Kara was Nine years old now. I was now 21 years old, and my hair was starting to recede.



While on my mission, 1978, Grandpa Wood died of a heart attack. He was on vacation in Southern California. In 1989, my cousin Jackie was killed in a traffic accident. It happened while he was riding his bike to work, when a big rig truck with a trailer turned made a right turn in front of him, Jackie couldn't stop and ran into the moving truck.



Cousin Jackie Wood

1981



Uncle Al, and Grandpa Lopez

Before starting work, I took a train trip to see family. It had been two years since I've seen my Mom, my aunts & uncles, cousins, and my Grandpa Lopez. It was a good trip, I took lots of pictures and tried reaching out to those aunts & uncles I had met before. My cousin, Anita Mora and I met with Grandpa and asked him about his history. He spoke in Spanish, so it was up to Anita to translate.

From Sacramento, I took the train to Salt Lake City, to see my Aunts & Uncles, cousins, and my Grandma Blanche. Aunt Kay had housed me the night before I went to the Mission Home, and I was anxious to see her again.

Grandma Wood, Howard Wood, and Kay Wood Rutherford



After coming home from my mission, Mom & Dad gave me the Vega as a present. I had it until the early 80's. I did make my first trip to Salt Lake City in this car ... and yes, it broke down in the Mojave desert on the way home.

(Note: this wasn't my car, but same model & color.)

My next car was a 72' Dodge Dart. It was well worth \$750. The Dodge made the trip to Utah 4 times, and Sacramento about the same. At the time, I was delivering the Los Angeles Times in the morning. I really did love the job, though waking up at 3:30-



4am everyday was challenging at times. Remember, I was in my mid-20's and going to the Church dances every week.

Listening to the radio was a great plus ... my favorite station was KPFK. Roy of Hollywood (real name Roy Tuckman) produced, engineered and hosted the "Something's Happening" show. His show ran from 12 midnight to 6:00 a.m., Monday night/Tuesday mornings through Thursday night/Friday mornings. Monday was "environment/anything goes" night. Tuesday was "health/alternative medicine" night, mainly featuring Gary Null. Wednesday was politics night. Thursday was "spirituality/mysticism" night, often featuring Alan Watts, Aldous Huxley, and so many others.

For the next couple of years, I went back to Jafco for work. I planned to start El Camino College, part-time. It was nice to work with my old buddies, once again: Gil Archambeau, Roy Smith, and Bob Stanford. I mainly helped Bob do repairs on swimming pool motors. I also did lots of deliveries, for customers, who had bought some furniture or perhaps a Bar-B-Que. Those deliveries took me all over the LA & Orange counties, and education in itself.



Cindy Stringham

That first Valentine's day, 1981, I took some flowers to Cindy Stringham's house. We soon started dating, and spending lunches together at the LDS Institute at El Camino College, not to mention the hours spent on her front porch saying goodnight. Her family loved popcorn, Cal & Fran, were her parents. Cindy was my first steady girlfriend since being home from my mission. Prior to Cindy, my last steady girlfriend, and my first, was Jenny Mantecon.



Marcel, Cindy Stringham, Me, Valerie, Steve Oster, and Ed Gurr

I think we went steady for about 9 months. I asked Cindy to marry me ... she prayed on it, and let me know the answer was NO. I was hurt for a while, but moved on with Dances and many young adult activities.

Letter from Cindy Stringham, fall of 1981

Dear Howard,

I don't know what to write about. I love you and want to be with you all the time. But I feel that I need to spend a little of my time with girls my own age. Some times I think that I will never make it. But I know that I can if I just do what Heavenly Father wants me to; the hard part is finding out what it is he wants me to do.

I feel a deep love and friendship for you. I pray that we will do what is right and not let the world and school get in the way of what we need to do.

all my love,
Cindy

1982

We took a great trip to Salt Lake City, Utah. Kara, Lamont, Mark, and I drove the Chevy Vega, which did a good job, small mind you. We attended our first family Reunion, and it was a blast.

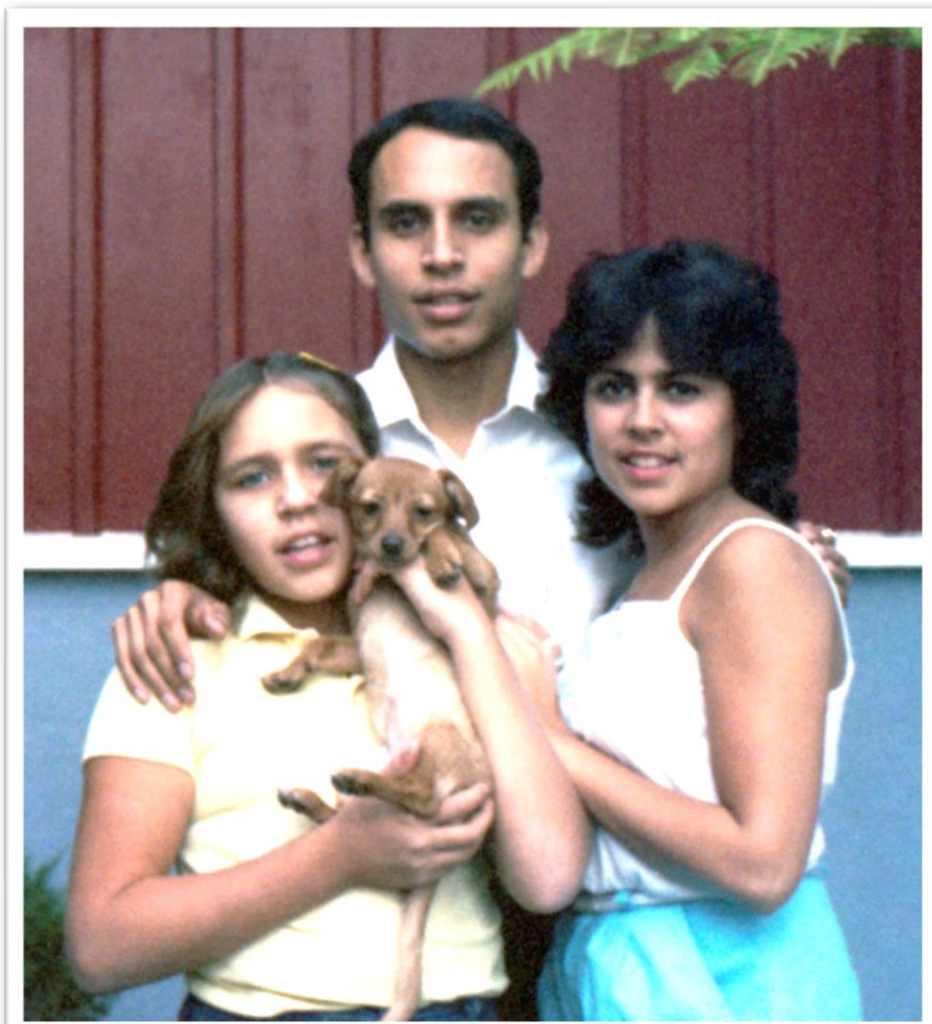
The car did break down, and Dad drove the 100 miles to fetch us. We disabled the drive shaft and towed it home, with Dad's truck.

Wendy, at this point, had been working for Northrop, a government defense contractor, located in Pico Rivera, about 2-3 years.

I think her commute was, with traffic, about an hour each way.



*L»R: Melanie Rutherford,
Kara Wood, and Andi*



*Kara, Me, And Wendy. The little puppy, Andi, was a gift from our
cousins In Utah.*

In a letter to me, Wendy wrote how her legs were shot for 3 days after an evening of dancing, well working full time at Northrope also took a toll on Wendy's legs. I remember quite well how tired Wendy was at the end of her workday. After taking her shoes off, Wendy would plop herself on the sofa, and politely ask me, *"Would you mind messaging my legs ... Please!!!"*

As I'm writing this, I'm 61 years old, and I'm thrilled to death when I get a brief back scratch by , Helen (who I do love deeply)..

1983/84



Judy Kidd

In about 1983/84, I met Judy Kidd at a Square Dance, sponsored by the Torrance Stake. She was wearing a pair of green "Dittos" overalls. Total fascination, we spoke some and she told me where she worked. Soon after that, on a rainy day, dad and I went for lunch, and I had him swing by the Tri-manna bookstore, where Judy worked. Needless to say, I would make it a habit to buy and read lots of books.

She was small and a real dynamo. She was the Sorority leader at the Harbour Institute. We went to the beach lots, and every week-day, we worked out together. We would meet at the Del Amo Sports Club at 6am, every week-day. I would do some weights for about 30 minutes, then meet Judy for aerobics, we would also play racquet ball. The Club had separate spas, steam-rooms, and dry saunas for the men & women. My routine was to do all three of those, then shower. The discussions we would have, while resting in the hallway between activities, will always be memorable. Judy's voice went down an octave, at least, when she was tired.

One morning after our workout, while I was shaving, a voice came over the intercom ... "Howard Wood, please pick up the house phone" ... It was Judy to say "I standing here with no clothes on" ... What was I to make of that, other than her random hints at humour. This all was a blast, and the Club made some good sandwiches and smoothies. We both heard the song, "Hello" by Lionel Richie, for the first time while playing racketball. We both came to absolutely love the song and it really did become our song.

In the later part of 1984, our club "the Del Amo All Pro", was to be sold to a corporation called "The Sports Connection". They had several other clubs in the South Bay Area. We had it nice at Del Amo All Pro, and rumours had it that things were going to change. We attended an evening meeting, in which all of us that were concerned with with this change of ownership. There issues were raised, and possible challenges to the sale. A week or so later, Judy and I met with an attorney, Michael Kellogg, to handle a small claims suit for us. As I remember, we wanted our initial membership money refunded. Kellogg prepared papers for us to serve the brothers who owned Del Amo All Pro. It truly was a learning process for Judy & I. Going for breakfast together, once or twice weekly, after our morning at the Club.

As a side note: We didn't get our membership money refunded, which was about \$400, but there you go ... Our young attorney, Michael Kellogg, was a sole practitioner in Torrance. In 1996, Gov. Pete Wilson appoint Michael to Los Angeles Municipal Court. Then in the year 2000, Michael was elevated to the Superior Court, for the State of California.

Judy seemed to rub Wendy absolutely the wrong way with her frequent telephoning. ***"Howard, that brat is on the phone, Again!"***

Afternoons at the beach

Days out at the beach together. Judy's red & white swimsuit, suntan oil.

Expand

Huntington Library . . .

Gospel related plays: Judy and I went to see a couple of LDS produced plays: "My Turn on Earth", and "Third Nephi". When we see "My Turn on Earth", Judy had bought seats right next to my old girlfriend, Jenny Mantecon, and her soon to be husband.

Our first Kiss

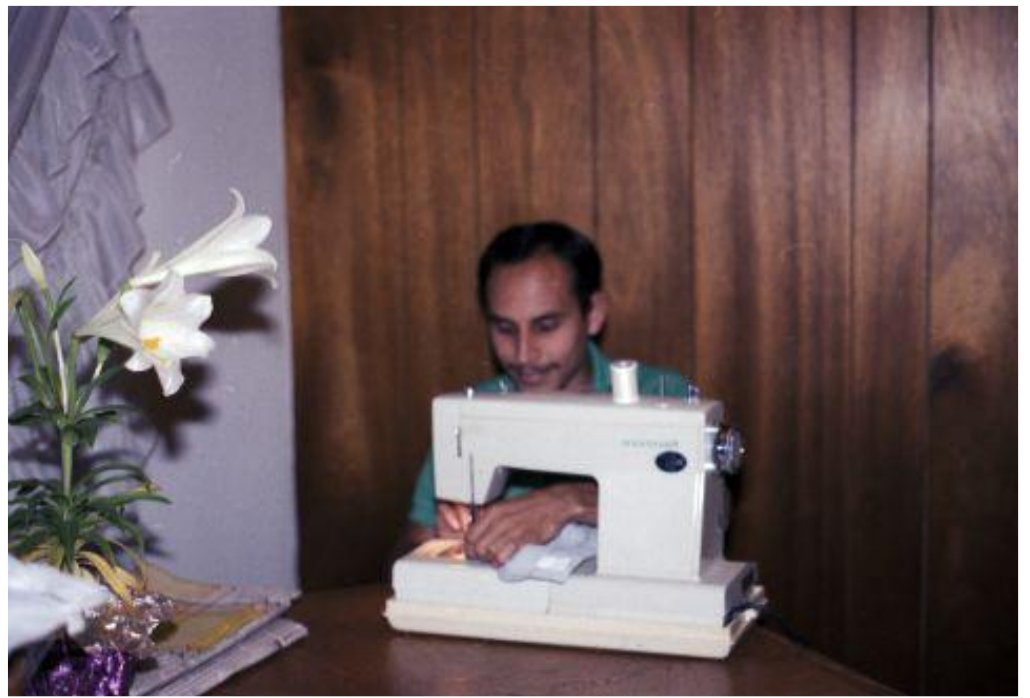
*When we went to see Third Nephi, with Judy's parents, I made the move to put my arm out & around her Judy. Then, at a strategic moment, I planted a kiss on Judy's pert lips. I was quite aware that Judy's parents where just a couple seats away, but, as I remember, they didn't seem bothered by it – I actually knew they liked me. Judy's Dad was the Bishop of their Ward (Wilmington). Later that night when we got to her place, and after spending sometime talking downstairs in their kitchen, and it being close to 12midnight, I left for home and gave her *Our second Kiss*.*

Expand:



Evening w/ Judy and her parents ... discussing upcoming elections.

For Judy's birthday, I made a matching skirt & vest. It took 25 hours to make, using a pattern & material I had bought.



L»R: Judy, And Her Parents

As time went on, I found myself being so involved with friends who lived very close to me, and Judy did likewise. Because we weren't seriously dating, we did gradually stopped seeing each other..

A few years later

Judy married Allen Oakley (I was in DC at the time), I visited them and presented a pitch about investment in mutual funds, I was preparing to pass my series 7 exam*, this must have been about 1995 or so. I was rather shocked that she married Alan, because of her close relationship with Jonathan Allen, of the Torrance Stake. Jonathan was on a mission, when Judy and I was together. I was with Nancy, when Jonathan must have come home from his mission & I lost contact with Judy. They didn't have any children yet, and were living in Long Beach.

In the year 2001, when Judy & her new husband, Jonathan Allen caught up with Helen and Me. Helen and I were living in Hemet, and visited Dad for the Forth of July. That's when Judy & Jonathan (with about 3 children) unexpectedly came over to dad's. We then decided to do a picnic at El Nido park. This was an ever memorable event for Helen, as Judy overtly was foning over me. Helen, jokingly brings this up that day at the park, every now and then. "Howard do you remember when we used to ", as Judy would straighten or pick something off my shirt.

So apparently, Judy & Alan was living in Utah, when Jonathan came for a visit. He apparently stayed and never left. Alan & Judy must have had problems, because Alan was to leave. I think Judy & Alan had about 3 children, and Judy w/ Jonathan, another 3 children. Oh, and it turns out that Jonathan had initially married Theresa Ackers. Lamont, Dale, and I did lots of things with Theresa, Polly, and some her friends so many years earlier... She was so fun to be around, and how sad that she & Jonathan didn't make a go of it.

Currently, I'm in contact with both Judy & Theresa, via FaceBook. Both of whom are grandmothers

Wendy's Death

Wendy died on September 6th, 1983. What is there to say, we were so sadden and missed her sweet spirit. Here are the bare facts: One late night, Wendy had ran into a parked truck & trailer. Wendy was driving a little blue Honda Civic.



The big truck was parked illegally on Normandie Avenue, in Carson. It was very late that evening, as Wendy and cousin Becky had been out for the evening.

Wendy's Honda was very similar to this one.

The Funeral

Wendy's funeral was held at our Stake Center, on Artesia Bl., in Torrance. The chapel was absolutely full to capacity. Wendy had lots of friends in the Church, at work, and from school. We had lots of relatives, from Sacramento, Salt Lake City, and Phoenix.

I gave the opening prayer and Wendy's eulogy. I remember how hard it was to give that talk, I was filled with so much emotion, having my suffered my greatest loss. The tears flowed and my voice quivered.

The pallbearers were: Uncles Dick, Uncle Jack, Steve Meschler (Wendy's last boyfriend), Jeff Beck (Nancy Ashworth's boyfriend), Al Ashworth (Nancy Ashworth's dad), and myself. Mark was on his Mission, and could not attend. I can only imagine how he suffered, by not having that closure.

With the L.A. Sheriffs providing escort, we made our way to Green Hills Memorial Park, which was about 5 miles away.

Sometime in 1984, I bought my 1972 Dodge Dart. I saw it off the side of the road near our house, \$750 cash.



I took a job delivering the L.A. Times newspaper in the mornings. This was to allow me the day time to start my college education at El Camino

Community College. Working in the mornings, 4am-6am, was ideal to listen to the radio while I delivered the paper. My choice station was KPFK, they had a broadcaster, Roy of Hollywood, that had the most diverse programming from 12midnight to 6am.

With this schedule, I had lots of time to do Institute classes & activities. Also plenty of time to spend with friends.

I spent lots of time with my buddies: Lamont Mitchell, Dale Bench, David Lang, and of course my brother, Mark. We went out to eat lots, many Single dances and activities did all sorts of stuff together. We would visit lots of different Single wards, meeting new people, and especially young women.



Lamont Mitchell, Howard Wood, and Dale Bench.

Most every Friday & Saturday nights, me and my buddies would go to a LDS Singles Dance, somewhere in the LA or Orange counties. We all had a great time. I loved to dance and loved to date. We all loved the meet up afterwards, at a Bob's Big Boy, or Coco's restaurant. Double hamburger, fries, soda ... followed up by a Bob's fudge cake for desert.

Thinking back, we had so many LDS friends and acquaintances, that we had met at dances, that we were protected from that “worldly” element out there of sex, alcohol, drugs, and the like.

I seemed to also have had my own circle of girl friends. Since Lani, Carrie, and Lorie were good friends, I did do stuff in a group, but quite often, I just spent time individually. Judy, however, wasn't in this circle of friends. She lived in the neighboring Torrance Stake, and went to Harbor City Community College and was involved in their activities, and being their sorority president, she kept busy.



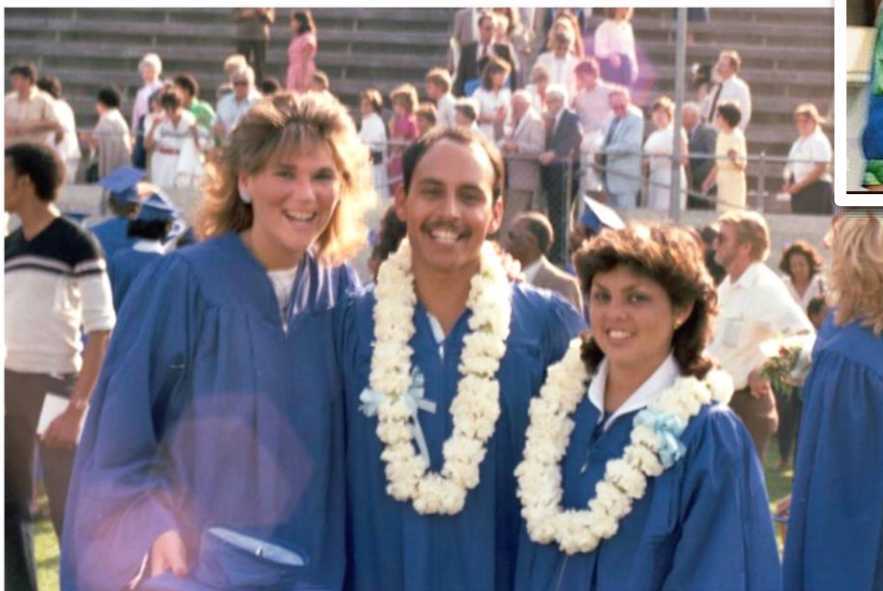
Carrie Miyasato, Lorie Ball, and Mark

Lani Yoneda, Carrie Miyasato

Both Lani and Carrie were from my home ward of Torrance 2nd. Lorie Ball was in a neighboring ward. They were all very good friends and we all went to El Camino College, and took Institute classes, and loved the Institute activities, especially the big lunches.



Lani Yoneda.



On a regular basis, I would pick Lani up for Church. Being good friends, since she was dating someone else, we would sit together and enjoy being together -- much like being cousins and we just got on well. Lorie loved to take pictures, go swimming at her Aunt's house, and trying new places to eat out.

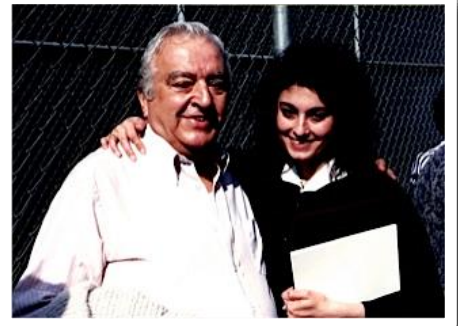
Come Valentines' day, I would buy a red rose, in a vase, with a card for all four of these wonderful young women: Lorie, Lani, Carrie, and Judy. I loved making the rounds, while they were at work, and deliver the flowers myself. I was full of romance, in this chapter of my life.



Maral Barsoumian

While at El Camino College, my best subject was *Principles of Accounting*. I had a fantastic teacher, Tim Miller. , he had the best sense of humor, and when you are teaching Principles of Accounting, you need a good sense of humor.

In my accounting class, I became friends with Maral Barsoumian, who went to school with Lorie Ball, and lived just 3 blocks from her. She was Armenian, and so delightfully polite. I of course, wanted to spend time with her, as much as possible. Maral was sort of engaged to someone that her parents had arranged. In the years to come, they did eventually get married and opened up a restaurant, Amoretti, near Oxnard, CA.



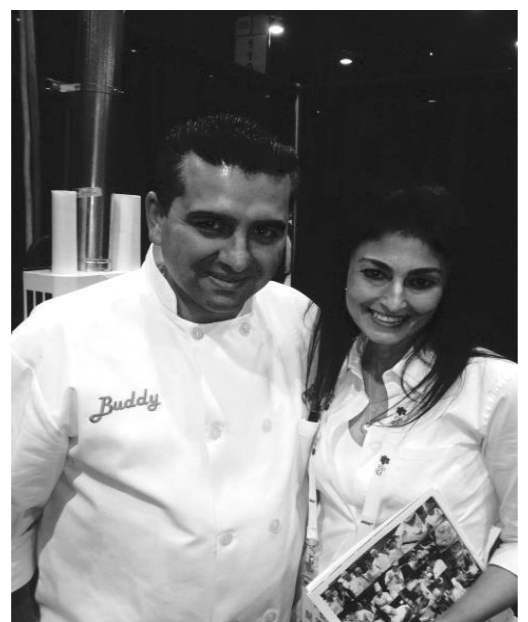
***Maral Barsoumian
and her dad***



Maral with her husband Jack

YouTube Video:

Maral Barsoumian's Amazing Presentation on QVC!



Maral's parents had a restaurant in Redondo Beach, by the name of Papa Garos. The food was so good, especially the Mama Garo vegetarian pizza, which I always had roast lamb added, for flavour.

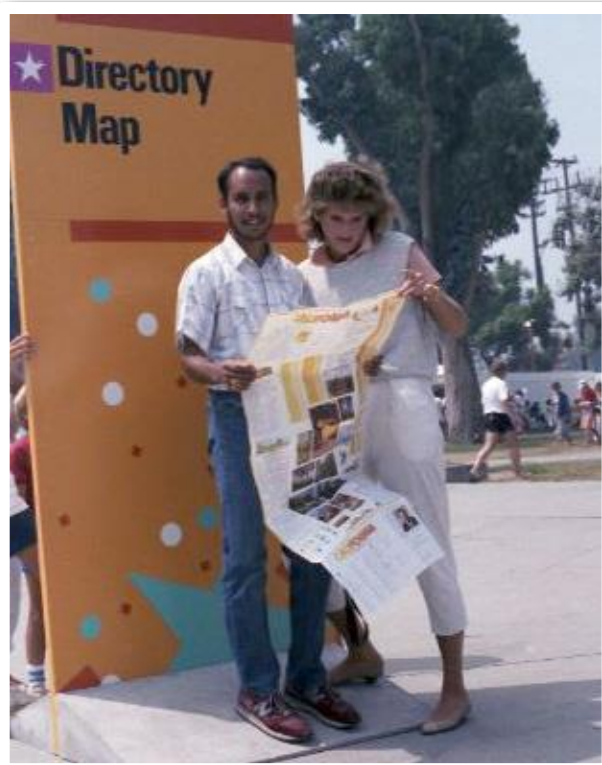
I've taken Dad there a few times, and all my buddies. Even years after, I would take my special dates there, mainly because Maral's mother would come by my table, sit for a short bit and build me up. They also had fantastic Armenian food, and great pizza. Maral also transferred to USC, taking business.

1984 Los Angeles Olympics

The 1984 Olympics were being held in Los Angeles. My brother, Mark, and I signed up to volunteer. We were called in to get our clothes, jackets, shoes. But, no other phone call came to actually do any work. Sometime during the Olympic Games, Lorie and I went to walk around. It was being held downtown at the Coliseum, and USC. We had a great afternoon, ate some overpriced food, but hey, it's a memory.



L»R: Engrenque, Jackie Bradlaw, Carrie Miyasato, Howard Wood, Karen Wilson, and Mark Wood



Lorie was to start a new job, and I made a yard sign to surprise her. Much thanks to Lyn Walker & her daughters for their help in making this sign.



Mark, Lamont, Me & Lorie

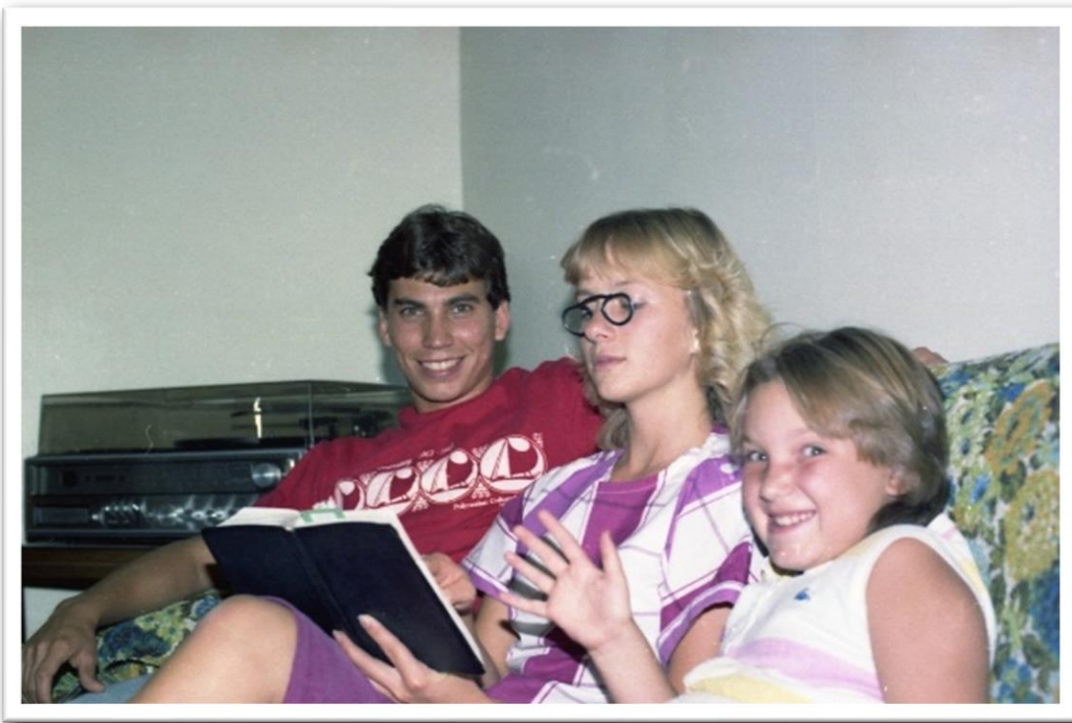
A visit to Salt Lake City

During these young adult years, I travelled to Salt Lake City most every summer. Either Lamont, Mark, or Kara would come with me.

We would most always stay with Uncle Ron. I loved taking pictures of family, seeing Salt Lake's downtown, seeing as many relatives as I could, and copying old family photos, via a special macro lens, that I bought especially for this purpose.



***Grandma Blanche Wood, Mark Wood
Uncle Ron, and Cousin Mindy Rutherford***



Mark, Charloette Wentworth, and Cousin Mindy

What loads of fun Mindy was when we went over to Charlotte's apartment. We literally had a blast over to her place.

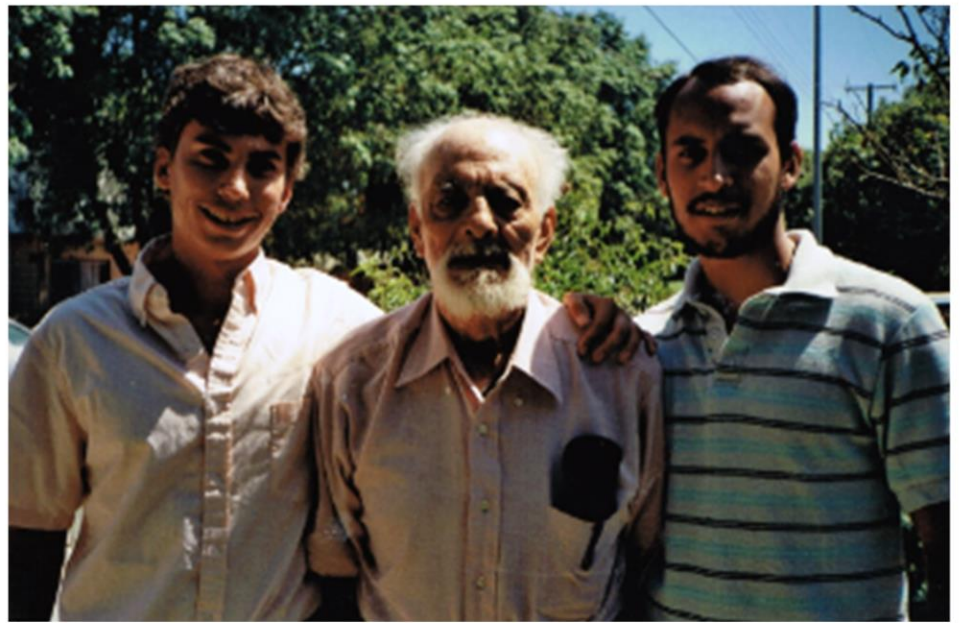
We always enjoyed staying with Aunt Kay's family. Aunt Kay had 4 girls: Tiffany, Jennifer, Melanie, and Mindy.

Mark Wood and cousin Tiffany Rutherford



Driving to Sacramento, to see family, as a young adult, is a bit different then being dragged by mom & dad. Totally free to see who I want, and for as long as I wanted.

One purpose of my visits, was to copy old family photos that my uncles and aunts had. People are always reluctant to part with photos, so by taking pictures of their photos, I side stepped that issue. I bought a special macro lens that let me zero in on those photos and get the best image possible.



Mark Wood, Grandpa Lopez, and Howard Wood



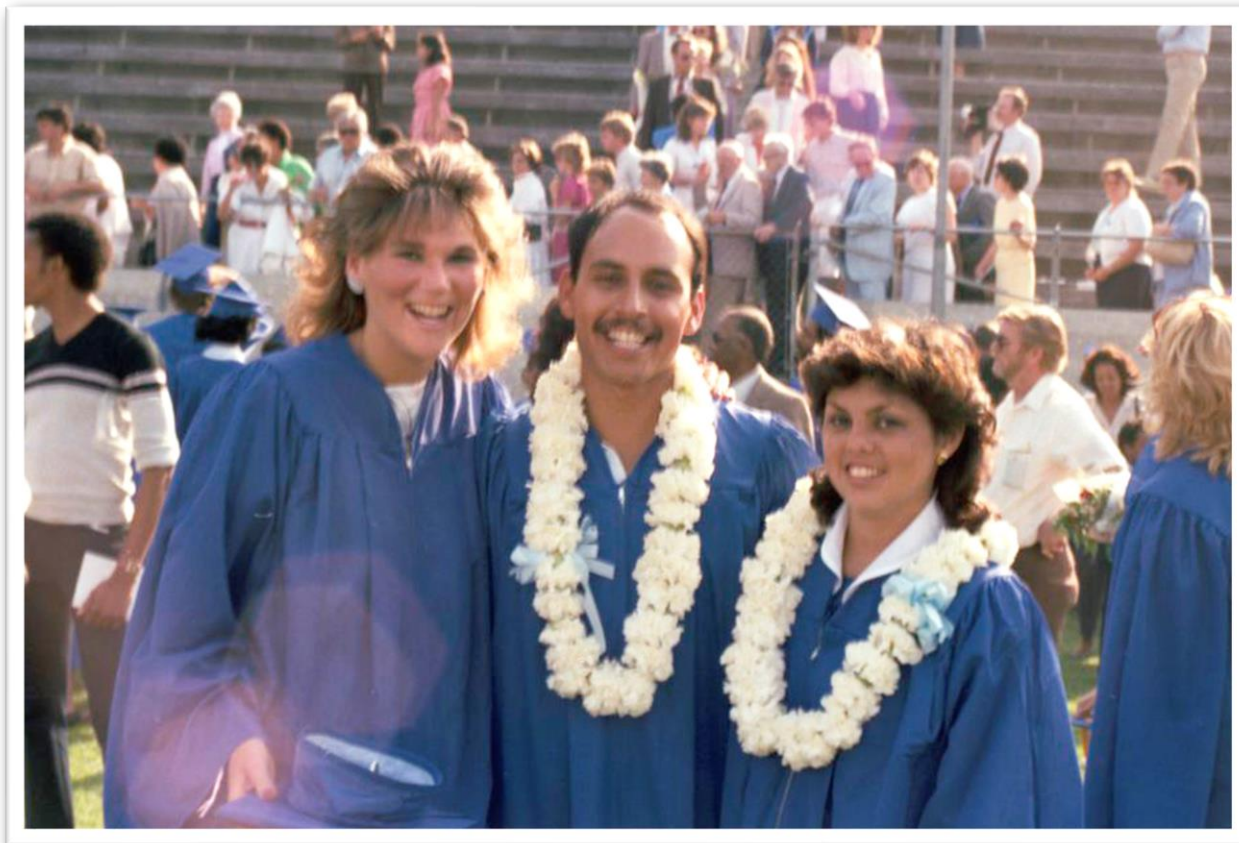
Cousin Lisa Mora, Uncle Lalo, Aunt Connie Mora, Cousin Anita Mora, and Howard Wood

seeing each other. I was able to break the ice and establish a new link for our families.

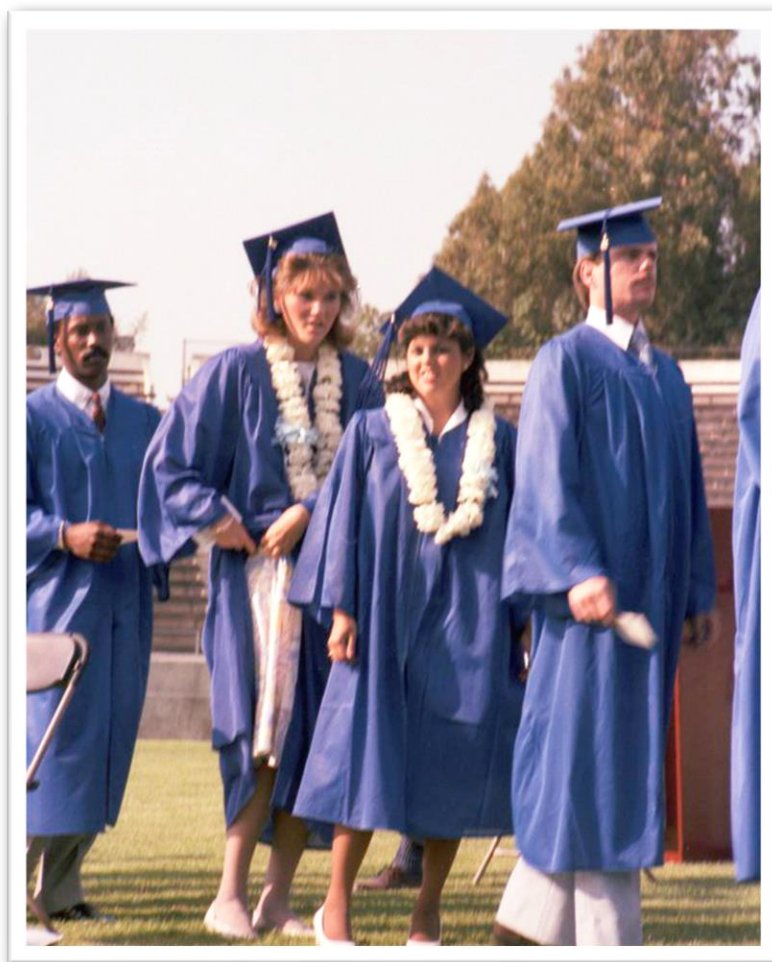
Another reason was to visit those distant relatives that I, and many others never visited.

Uncle Lalo was Grandpa Lopez's younger brother. Some 20 years prior, a misunderstanding had kept their families from

1985 – Graduation from El Camino College



Lorie Ball, Me, and Carrie Miyasato



Nancy Sorrells

Born Nancy Dawn Dougherty, 1962.

After my brother, Mark, got back from his mission, we went to a Young Adult Pool Party. It was there that I saw and fell in Love with Nancy Sorrells, love at first sight, I'd say.

Our first date was dinner and a long walk at the Redondo Beach Pier. Talked for hours.

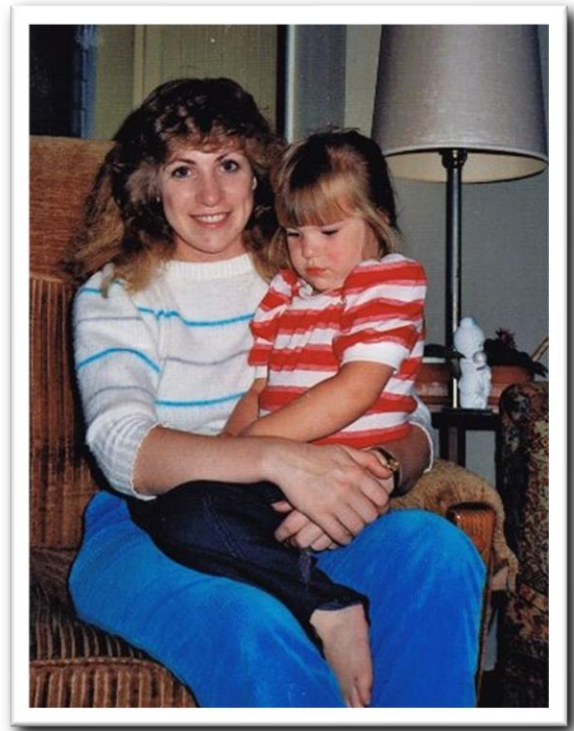
Nancy had been married before and had a five year old daughter, Jenny. We started dating steadily from then on. Though I loved Nancy very much, dating someone who had been married is very dangerous move. And by dangerous, I mean the ways of sexuality. She had been there, I hadn't, and with "*the flesh being weak*", I had given in. We were soon making plans to marry.

We had our ups and downs, and had stopped seeing each other several times, but always got back together soon afterwards.

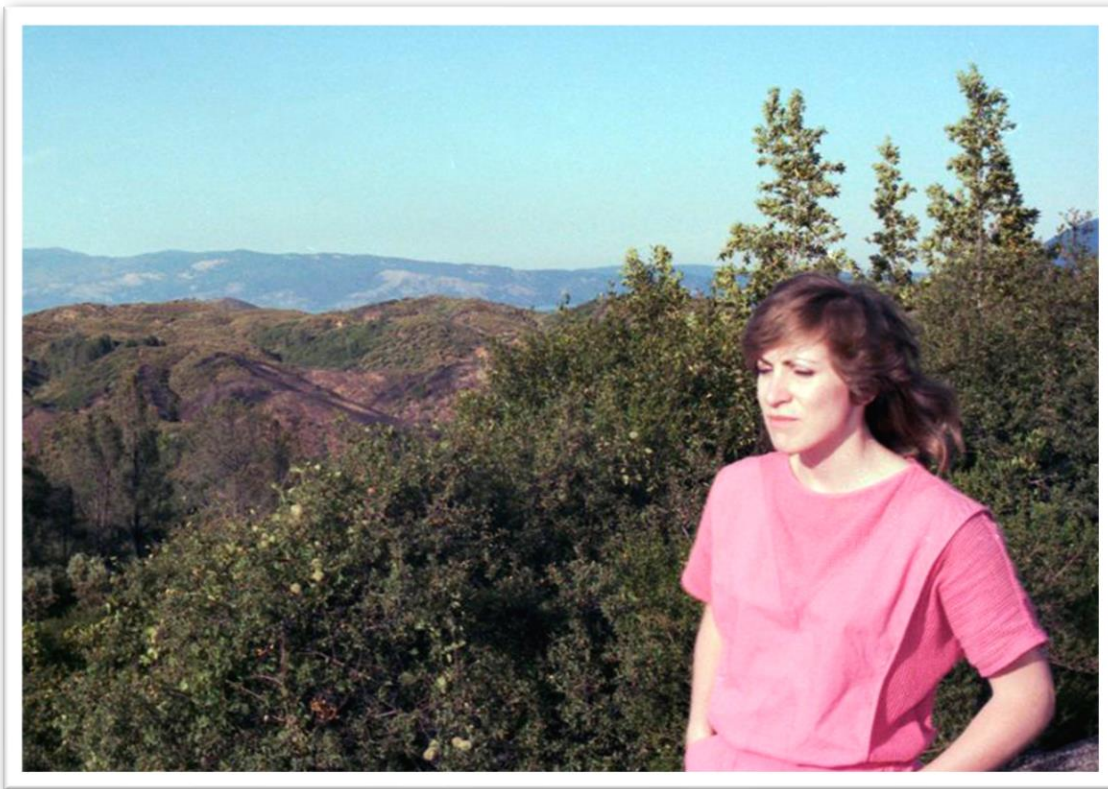
Earlier, in May, we even took a 3-day cruise. We had broken up prior to the cruise, but tickets had been bought way before. So, Lamont, David & his girlfriend, and I took the three-day Cruise to Mexico, not expecting Nancy to show up. However, to my surprise she showed up with a date of her own What !!! After a few hours, I sent a note to her, we met and were inseparable after that.



Nancy at the Young Adult pool party, the first time I saw her.



Nancy with her 5 Year old Daughter, Jenny



Trip to Mendocino to meet Nancy's parents.

1985 – Our Wedding

In August of 1985, right after my graduation, from El Camino College, Nancy and I drove to Utah, via Las Vegas, to get married. We brought my good friend Lamont to be a witness and help drive.

Oh what a trip that was. Needless to say, when we did get to Uncle Ron's house, we spent some quality time in Grandma's bedroom. Thank goodness Grandma was living in Arizona



Robby was born in March 29th 1986, in the hospital in Redondo Beach. Our marriage did not get off the ground and ended rather quickly. I just wasn't mature enough to realize just what happiness I could really have. Nancy moved up to Sacramento just days after Robby's birth. Robby lived with his mother until he was 11 years old.



1986

Rob's birth



Lamont w/ his cousin Peggy. Kara is talking with Nancy.

Starting my Bachelor's Degree at the University of Southern California, Los Angeles, California

In the Fall of 1985, I began my bachelor's degree in Public Administration. The USC campus was located just outside the downtown area of Los Angeles. Across the street, from the Campus, was Exposition Park, where the Los Angeles Colosseum was located.



It was a big campus, compared to El Camino Community College, but I did explore most of it before too long. The classes were not too large, and the course work was very well within my ability.

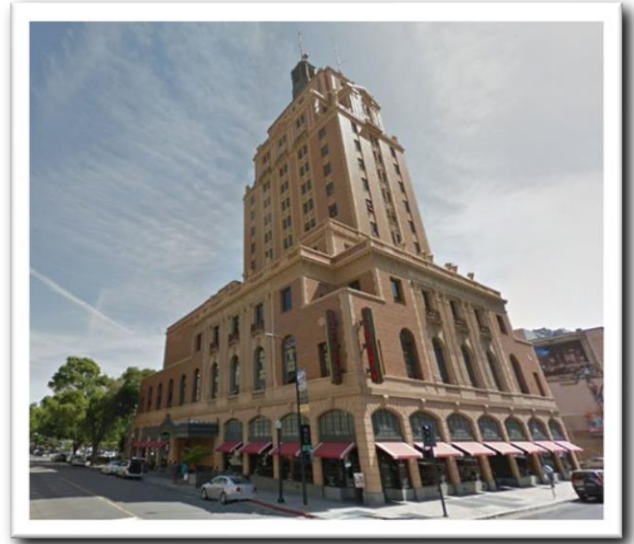
Job wise, I was working for the L.A. Times, delivering the morning paper. Since I had worked there the year before, it was no trouble starting right away. Thanks to my good ol' Dodge Dart, it made doing the job very convenient.



1987,

Living in Sacramento: Pursuing a
Master's degree in Public Administration.

I took three semesters at the main campus, then my fourth & last at the Sacramento Public Affairs Center, which was especially set up for our Public Administration program. Serving a State or Local government internship was part of the Public Administration degree. So, while doing an internship at the State Department of Education, I took my classes at the Center. I recall, there being about 8 students at the time. Carolyn Peterson, from Orange County seems to be the only one I remember. I do have a picture of all of us, Our internship coordinator's name was Nancy Stump.



Great, I've got 3 Nancys in my life. My mother of course, Nancy, my recently divorced wife, and now my Internship coordinator.

Living in Sacramento

Housing was well in hand, by arranging to stay with my Aunt Cecilia Meneses. I was to also stay with Aunt Rosie, and Cousin Lydia Hernandez. I always loved to be with family, and I loved to take pictures. And I took lots of Pictures.

Living in Sacramento made it very easy to visit Nancy and Robby. Robby was a bit more than a year old now. Nancy's daughter, Jenny, was about 7. I must say, visiting Nancy was like we actually never divorced. We had lovely dinners, a bit of wine, etc..., next morning I would make some breakfast.

Oh, they had a swimming pool in the neighbourhood, and that was great fun. I never realized how much Nancy loved the water. Frisky she was.

Robby had a creek, near the house, lined with lots of huge Oak Trees, that was great to ride bicycles. Little Jenny was very persistent about washing my car, she need some money for the Ice Cream Truck.

Undergrad Internship: Sacramento, CA

In Sacramento, I arranged an Internship with The State Department of Education, in the office of curriculum. That lasted for some six months. I didn't get paid, but that was part of the deal. So, I finished my classwork, and graduation ceremony was to be in the summer.



I decided to venture on to a Master's program in Public Administration. This meant I was to stay in Sacramento. Part of the Programs was to do Three Internships: Federal Level, State Level, and local government. So, I took the appropriate Exams to be admitted into the Master's program.



California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office

So, my first internship was with the Chancellor's Office for Community Colleges. This is the main office for all 100 plus community colleges in California. I got paid \$8 an hour. Computers at this time was the green screened WANG Computers. The laser printers were in another floor.

I loved eating lunch in downtown Sacramento. One could find a few Chinese, 4 Japanese, and other type restaurants. Lunch time specials \$3. Great.



Amtrak Train to Salt Lake City, Washington D.C., New Orleans, El Paso, and Chihuahua, Mexico.

With School over, and knowing I was going to Washington D.C. in January (1988), Lamont & I planned a trip to get an idea of what D.C. was about. Taking the Amtrak train to D.C., we could stop in Salt Lake City for a few days, then on to D.C. for a week, then to New Orleans, then on to El Paso, and back to Los Angeles.

While in El Paso, we planned to stay for about a week, with the parents of my sister-in-law, Sonia Pina. They actually lived on the other-side of the border, in Juarez, Mexico. I wanted to do some genealogy work in those places my ancestors were from. We took a train to the capital city of Chihuahua, and had some luck with finding some records of my Grandmother's birth. We also took a bus to El Parral, and a taxi to the small village of Rio Florido, where the Cardenas family came from. I didn't speak hardly any Spanish, and Lamont didn't speak any, but with some luck and some very patient folks, we did alright, with no problems at all.

1988, Staying at the Oakwood Apartments, Alexandria VA

In January of 1988, I moved to Washington D.C.. I went by air, and landed during a big snow storm. Having rode the Metro last year, during vacation, I was somewhat aware of what was going on. I made it to Alexandria, and to the Oakwood apartments. I had made arrangements to sublet through BYU Internship Program. So, I always had 3 roommates, in a huge two bedroom apartment



At the Oakwood Apartments, there was about 20 BYU students, a couple of University of Utah students, and me, from USC. Other universities also had interns staying there. The Oakwood apartments were set-up for corporate & military use, no families.

I had lots of roommates, met many people that were doing an internships through BYU, and some former students that were in the Colonial Ward.

Through the BYU University Internship Program, I not only sub-rented an apartment, but was included in all their excursions. For example, we saw Gettysburg, Colonial Williamsburg, Mount Vernon, Monticello, and the Amish Country. I saw these several times, because I had lived with the BYU students for 2 years.



Attending Church in Alexandria, Virginia



Together, about 4 of us would carpool to Church each Sunday morning . The Colonial Ward was in Alexandria, on the other end of town, taking about 20 minutes to get there. The Colonial Ward was a singles ward, comprising of Interns, and local singles, many of whom had served an Internship in D.C., then after graduation, returned to work full-time somewhere in the Government, private companies that does business with the government, a law firm, or a non-profit group of some kind. Just so much going on in D.C., and the surrounding cities.

The Ward was huge, filling the whole chapel. The Gospel doctrine class wasn't just one class, there were about 4 Gospel Doctrine classes.

Fair to say, for the most part, the people in the D.C. area are so very sharp, intelligent, well dressed, and culturally refined.

I'm so very glad I chose to do my last under-grad semester in Washington D.C.. I did continue to take graduate level classes at USC's D.C. campus, but with working full time, I just didn't see the value of getting a Master's degree ... was that a wise decision, who really knows.

Graduate Level Internships, and Paid Work

With my resumé in hand, I soon started knocking on doors to the governmental and non-governmental agencies that had something to do with education. Since, I had spent the last year in Sacramento dealing with community colleges, I was going down that route.



Soon my luck started, I started working for the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges (AACJC).

Frank Mensel, my mentor, was the director for federal relations. Frank also, by chance, was a member of the Church. Our particular job, was to monitor federal legislation that dealt with community and junior colleges. I attended many Congressional Committee meetings on Capitol Hill. I did love the food at this French restaurant, that Frank would occasionally take me to.

One day, while on our way to a Congressional Committee meeting, Frank suggested I get more involved in the political side of things. So, I



***Frank Mensel,
Director Of Federal
Relations, At The
American Association
Of Community And
Junior Colleges.***



***President Bush and the First Lady spoke
at the Annual AACJC convention.***

knocked a few doors, and followed a few of Frank's suggestions, and I landed my first job in the US Senate.



The Senate Republican Policy Committee was located in the Hart Senate Office Building. My

Job was to help with the daily news briefings, which was for the Republican Senators. We would scan the newspapers for pertinent articles, cut them up, tape them on to printing paper, photo copy, and distributed them to all the Republicans Senators on a daily basis.



As the Presidential Election was starting to ramp up, I then got a job with the Republican National Committee, in their Opposition Research division. In O R (opposition research) we scanned the newspapers, mainly in Boston, for “dirt” on Governor Dukakis, who was the Democrat running for President, against George Bush. Let’s face it, this wasn’t glamorous or anything like that, but I was helping the Campaign.



Sometime later, about the beginning of summer (1988), we had a “shake-up” at the RNC. My immediate supervisor, Candice Struthers, was going to the Bush Campaign, which was downtown D.C., to take a position in Opposition Research. This is where George Bush was, and all of his staff. Upon Candice’s leaving, I was asked by her, to work with her at the Campaign.

Hot & Sweaty, is how I would describe working at the Campaign. It was a large Old building with limited air conditioning. I remember, my fresh starched shirts getting so wet. That is one thing I missed, not working in a professional environment, that is, wearing nice dressed clothes, and a freshly laundered shirt. I had a selection of white, and blue shirts. Oh, and I was into wearing some very nice cologne. I even enjoyed those face creams that came with the bottles of cologne. I felt a bit pampered.



On one occasion, the LA Dodgers came to the White House, for a Rose Garden ceremony. President Reagan congratulated the team. I did get some nice pictures of the ceremony and the Dodgers getting off the bus.



On another occasion, the campaign went to Brooklyn New York, to hand out George Bush for President flyers at a mall. Then we went to some key areas of the New York Marathon, and held up Campaign posters along the marathon route. I remember getting back to D.C., and remarking to myself, how nice it was to be in a city with not too tall of buildings, like I saw in New York City.

I must say the Food in Washington D.C. was fantastic. Since there was people from all over the world, we had food of so many ethnicities. I had actual Spanish food for the first time. On one occasion, as I was dating a young lady, who also worked in D.C., I took Jeanne to lunch, at the RNC restaurant. It was very exclusive, for Republican Senators and Representatives & their staff. Over a couple of glasses of wine and a nice lunch, that afternoon was fantastic. I think it cost me \$50.



1989

Inaugural Ceremonies for President George GW Bush



February 1989, after George Bush's victory, Kara came to visit and attended some of the Inaugural festivities, such as, the Inaugural Parade, & a couple of the Inaugural Balls/Dances. Kara had brought with her, a white wool over coat that I had bought her, in Torrance a few years prior. Oh it was a nice looking coat.

The weather was so bitterly cold, but we make the most of it, I remember Kara running from building to building and to the Metro station, to avoid the hurting cold.

Tickets for the Parade were \$100 each. These were the best seats available. We sat directly across the street from the President and his family. Kara and I had the best possible view of the Parade and of the President and dignitaries. Note: the restrooms, that had been put up were *heated* and quite large, large enough to have about 5 sinks and many stalls.



Working in Washington D.C. for 3 years, I had a fantastic experience. The many historical places I visited were very memberable.

For example, the US Capitol, the Senate Buildings, and House Buildings.

What was remarkable, was that they were all connected to each other, by an underground tunnel system & tram. Going from one side of the Capitol to the other, via the basement was an adventure , nothing straight forward about that, there were some many twist and turns.



Shortly after the Election, I was able to get a non-paying job at US Dept. of Education. Frank Mensel, my mentor at the AACJC, personally knew the Assistant Secretary for Vocational & Adult Education (OVAE). Her name was Bonnie Guiton. There, I worked with Tom Johns, the manager for legislation in that Office. My job was to attend Congressional Committee meetings, then prepare a summary and send it to the

managers in the OVAE.

After the Election of George GW Bush, I was able to secure a new job, in the OVAE, as a Special Assistant to Bonnie Guiton, the Assistant Secretary. She reported directly to the Secretary of Education. All of these jobs are political appointments.

I soon realized, after attending a couple of retirement parties, that spending the next 25 or 30 years doing administrative work, would not be a rewarding career.

Final Internship, at the National League of Cities



Part of the Master's program, was to serve three internships: Federal, State, and Local. So far, I've done a State & Federal, and now my last internship was with the National League of Cities.

For the three months I was there, I helped put together a book of small cities and towns, with populations smaller than 50,000 population, that had some special project or something that I could highlight and use as an example in the book.

Job as Waiter @ Friendly's Restaurant

Scott Fairholm and I rented an apartment, not too far from the Oakwood apts. He was out of the BYU program, having graduated, so he was looking for an apartment. We did find one, with two bedrooms and a rather nice weight room. I made good use of it, and ate the right foods and rested as much as possible, to let the muscles repair & grow.

I took up a job at Friendly's Restaurant, as a waiter. It was a bit rough, at the beginning, but I caught on fast and made employee of the month a few times. I loved the daily haul of tips. It was a learning experience. I rode

my bike, maybe about a 15 minute trip from our new apt., just a 2 minute walk from the old Oakwood Apts.



Heading back to Torrance, California

In the three years I spent living in Alexandria, Virginia, I had accumulated lots of stuff ... Real smart!!

I decided to look in the newspaper for a car. Since my previous Dodge Dart had worked so well, I was partial to finding a Dodge Dart. I did find a Chrysler Valiant, which was identical to the Dodge Dart. I paid \$300 cash for the car. Loading the car with my belongings was a chore, but it did all fit in.

I bought a map and off I went. I use interstate 35, which took be through Kansas, and Colorado. I dropped by Ron Mitchell's house in Denver. The car needed work on the carburetor. Ron knew someone in his Ward that was a mechanic. It turned out to be someone that I knew on my mission. Small World.

I then took the route northward, through Wyoming , then down to Salt Lake City, Utah. I had a two day visit with Uncle Ron before heading to Torrance. Let me just say, I did have several minor car problems and did limp into Torrance. Not only did the car have a lot of rust, but the brakes were shot, and the car wasn't really worth keeping.

I drove it a few blocks away from Dad's house and left the key in the ignition, and walked away. I never did register the car back East, so there was no record who the car belong to. The car had a Maryland licence plate to top it off.

Working for Electrolux & Kirby Vacuums

Upon arriving back in Torrance in 1991, I looked in the papers for a job that I could use my Degree in Public Administration. I answered an ad that was being held in the Marriott Hotel in Torrance. Well, it was a recruited seminar for the Electrolux Vacuums.

Soon after, I started selling the Electrolux vacuums, door-to-door. My branch manager, Michael Lucy, went with me and showed me how to put the upright model under my arm and put on 3 demonstrations, in which I would average a sale. I'll most likely mention this later, but my sales career gave me a real education in people's skills.



Tony Arminio



After a few months, Electrolux entered into a partnership with the Bullocks department store, Montgomery Wards, and Price Club, to sale their machines.

We as salesmen, would set up the display of the machines, and demonstrate the Electrolux vacuums to the customers. At the Bullocks store, which was "high class", we didn't demonstrate, but rather be on hand to educate and sell the machines. We got 20% commission of the retail price. Retail price for the upright vacuum was \$299, and \$399 for the canister model.

We also preferred to deliver the machines ourselves (free of charge) in order to get in the house, show them how to use it, and most of all, show them the shampooer ... we would make 35% off the \$499 sticker price. I did very well with the Bullocks' department store.

After two years with Electrolux, I joined up with the Kirby Vacuum Company. There I was a salesman and sold the Kirby Vacuum, strictly door-to-door. With time, I became a crew leader, then the recruiter and trainer.

After about three years, Mark and I opened up our own Kirby distributorship in Harbor City. We had it going for about a year or so, but we really never quite got it off the ground. We lost of shirts, but it was a good experience -- next time I have to be better prepared.



Jimmy Iorio



Mark and I, one year went on a Company paid trip to Hawaii. Mark was married at the time, and took Sonia. It was a four day trip. Had loads of fun.

Working for A1 Carpet Cleaning

Located 3 miles away, in Gardena, I started working for A1Carpet Cleaning. We used our own vehicle to put the portable steam machine, a power scrubber, all the chemicals, and other tools.

We were give jobs by the company, so there was never a shortage of jobs. We kept 50% of the job total. Out of that, we paid for our own chemicals and a monthly rent of the steam machine. The first person I trained with, Terry, would have huge sales. I remember one time, we had a job that was over \$1,000. We had to stretch out the time, to fill most of the day.



Living in Brisbane, CA

In the Spring of 1998, my son, Robby, and I went to spend some time with my mother, who lived in Brisbane, CA. At that time, mom was preparing to sell her condominium, and needed some painting done. We spent a total of about four weeks there. Mom, at this time was married to Tom Tafolla, who was originally from San Jose. They had met at work, several years prior, while working in some type of high tech company, in Sunnyvale, CA.

They must have moved to Brisbane because of a job he had gotten in San Francisco, working as a Paralegal, all in preparation to take the Bar Exam.

Mom and Tom did buy a house in Rio Vista, which is much closer to Sacramento, maybe a 30 minute drive. Rio Visa is right of the Sacramento River and is surrounded by lots of water. Mom had to take the ferry, in order to cross the River, when driving to Sacramento.



Son, Rob & Sister, Kara

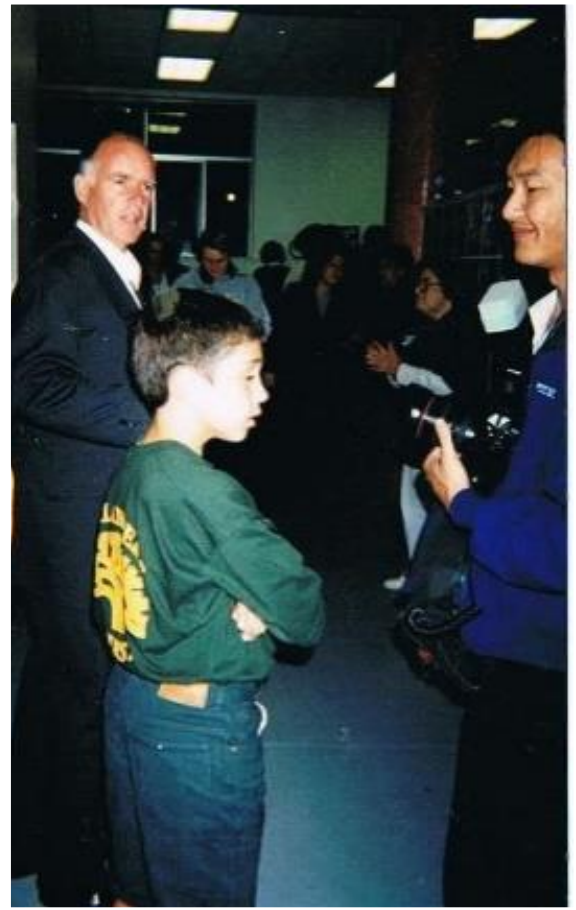


Howard, Kara, and Mother

Jerry Brown for Oakland Mayor Campaign

In addition to helping mom prep her condominium, Robby and I volunteered to work on Jerry Brown's May oral Campaign, for the City of Oakland. We probably put in about 80 plus hrs. It was a lot of fun -- working with other people at his headquarters/home -- eating food that was prepared -- and being out in the field (dropping of materials to other volunteers or going door to door canvassing).





In August 1998, Robby came to live with me on a permanent basis. He was entering the seventh grade at Magruder Middle school.

At a Parent teacher conference, I was surprised to see my Science Teacher, Mr. Paloney, who was now teaching Robby. I also saw a few others, some 25 years later, like my math teacher, Mr. Barker.

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Helen Euinton, from Cornwall, England

In June 1999, I started corresponding to Helen Euinton, who lives in Cornwall, England. (This was through the LDS singles online.) We started talking on the telephone on a daily basis almost immediately. Thank goodness, that I had arranged to have a special telephone rate through MCI (for only 10cents/minute).

We would talk for two, three hours every night. Time would certainly just fly by -- we never would be at a loss for things to talk about.

We soon arranged for Helen to come for a two week visit, September 22nd 1999. Well, when the time came, I was very nervous -- picking her up at the airport, I guess I wondered what I was doing, but we soon got over our nervousness of seeing each other in the flesh for the first time. I took time off work, which at the time, I was working for Mattress Discounters, so that I could take her up north, to Rio Vista, to see Mom and Kara.

While visiting at Mom's, we went sight-seeing in San Francisco. We also visited Uncle Jack & Aunt Gloria in Walnut Creek. Helen I know was nervous, meeting the family and being in America. I know I could have made her feel more comfortable, but empathy isn't always my strong suit. Though looking back, I was a bit distant with Helen, I guess I was unsure what I was getting myself into. I also know that everyone was impressed, especially dad.



Among other things, Helen's ability to get along with others, and her cooking skills was most impressing to me. Well, the two weeks came and went. I promised to give her a call very soon. *The truth be known, I was still deep down, unsure about making a further commitment.*

October 1999, Robby's sister, Jenny came for a three day visit. She was to report on Nov. 4th -- she would soon be in the Army. So, I flew her down and we did all the touristy stuff. We saw Hollywood, Beverly Hills, Venice Beach, and Palos Verdes. Probably the highlight of her trip was Halloween at Knotts Scary Farm. We all had a great time, though we lost Robby towards the last.



Marriage to Helen

After much talking on the phone, Helen and I decided to get married. So, on November 27th, Bishop Mahkorn married us in his backyard. Dad, Mark, Kara & Jose were there for us. Now, Helen has three kids: Daniel - 14, Jordan - 12, & Sophie - 10. Robby at this time was 13. What a wonderful day,



afterwards, as a new family we went to the "Claim Jumper" for lunch.

Living in San Pedro, CA

After much time trying to find a place for us, prior to Helen coming over, I did find a 4-bedroom apt in San Pedro, \$1,700/month. I did have to put \$3,400 security deposit – Ouch!! The Harbor View Apartments were so very grand.



It was in a very nice apartment complex, with waterfalls, swimming pool & Jacuzzi, and lush surrounding. We lived there for about four months, we found it a bit stifling with four kids trying to play and make noise, and the management trying to keep them quite and well behaved. Helen painted some marvellous Christmas scenes on our windows (she is very talented). We thank dad for bringing lots of food at every opportunity.

Rob and Jordan went to a middle school in Rancho Palos Verdes, Sophie went to an Elementary school a few blocks away, and Daniel went to high school, in Torrance. We first tried San Pedro High, but NO, it was full of minorities and he wasn't getting any help settling in.



Breakfast time was great I would make pancakes, with Log Cabin syrup, and bacon, every weekday. Yes, we had to buy the syrup by the gallon.

I felt like a *short order cook*, getting it down just right, and done fast. One time, I accidentally handed Jordan a plate of pancakes, that was a little too close to the flame, and burnt his hand a bit.

It was soon Christmas time, and Rob had a real hatred for the Salvation Army person ringing the bell outside the Ralphs grocery store. He would shout out "Get a Job", why, I don't know, but Helen found this most embarrassing.





In February 2000, while visiting my cousin, Jenny, we were doing the yard sale bit. Hemet seemed to have lots of yard/garage sales on a Saturday morning. While at this one house, I asked if they were moving, "Yes" was the answer. I then asked if we could come in and look over the house. We got the landlords name, called him, and we soon moved in ourselves.

We did all of the cleaning and made it very nice -- and the rent was only \$800, instead of the \$1700 in San Pedro.

Move to Hemet, CA

In June 2000, Helen's parents & sister, Leah came for a visit. We went to Temecula, Venice, Hollywood, Beverly Hills, & some other good stuff. Her parents had just come back from visiting Jane in Utah.

My mother also came for a visit, via Amtrak.

August 2000, looking back over the past 5-6 months, we have accomplished a whole lot. To start, Helen is due to give birth, very, soon!

All of Helen's baby scans revealed that we were going to have a little girl. We had planned on calling her Phoebe. We even had a nursery decorated with her name as well, only to Seth born to us instead of Phoebe. What a

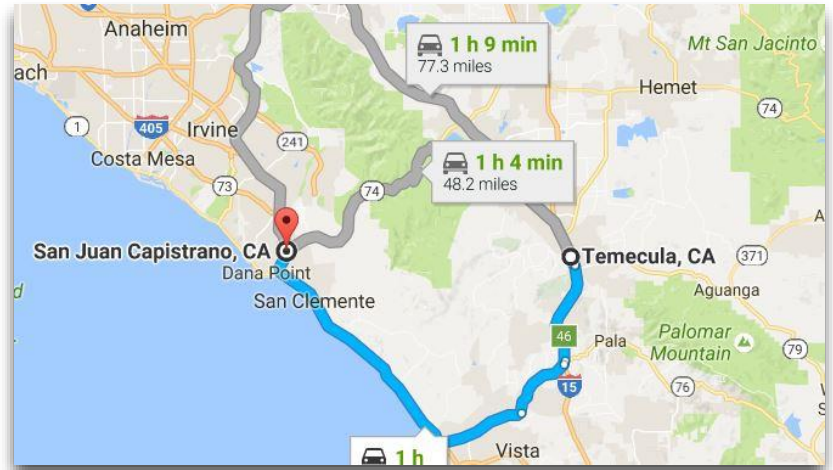
Shock!! The doctor did have one thing to say about Helen's giving birth, and that was "Big Head". Helen, by the way didn't have any form of pain relief. Brave woman, or was it, that she didn't have too much warning ahead of time.



Carpet Cleaning in Hemet

At this point, I was selling Kirby's in Torrance, during the weekdays, and driving back to Hemet for the weekends. This was not working, the sales just weren't coming through.

I saw an AD in a local newspaper, in Hemet for carpet cleaning. I met up with Bob in Temecula (about 30 some miles from Hemet), for an interview. It went well and I started cleaning carpet with him. Bob has a new chevy van (2001) fully loaded with a power steam machine.



We cleaned carpets in Hemet, Temecula, and in Orange County, and to reach those cities in Orange County, we had to drive to Lake Elsinore, then take the Ortega Highway through the mountains, and after 60 minutes, we would be in San Juan Capistrano, Orange County. We cleaned carpets in some nice houses, some worth over a million dollars. These were huge homes. I really did get good at steam cleaning carpets, and a good carpet cleaning starts with a good vacuum, especially around the edges. Now to fair, I did carpet steam cleaning before at A1 Carpet Cleaning, in Gardena, some ten years earlier, we used a portable unit instead of a truck mounted system.

After about 3 months, I literally got sick to my stomach one night, as I was working late, and doing this job all by myself. I was getting paid \$10 an hour, while Bob, the owner was making the full whack, minus my wage.

I soon got my Electrolux shampooer & my Kirby vacuum, and started my own carpet cleaning business. I made out flyers and, with a special white ball cap, with "Howard's Carpet Care" embroidered on it, I went door to door. Quite often I'd get in right away. Both Helen and I loved doing these jobs, because I would make well over \$100 a day, sometimes \$400.

I would do a top notch job vacuuming first, with special attention to the edges. Then take the ol' Electrolux shampooer and give it a good going over. When shampooing furniture, I'd set up the Kirby shampoo attachments together, then turn on the machine. I would not move the machine, but while in place, it would generate thick clean foam, which I then applied to the furniture with a brush.

Hemet has a very high population of senior citizens. Hemet also has huge numbers of trailer parks, which retired folks love, because of the low/none maintenance outside. Most of these trailer parks were fab, with a new Buick car in the freshly painted driveway. These old folks were friendly as well, and that make it all so rewarding.

This was a brief, but very positive chapter in my life. I think it was the sense of independence, doing a job I knew well, and having Helen backing my up.



All the kids finished the school year. Sophie will be going to the middle school next year, and Rob will be going to High school. Daniel will most likely take ROTC again next year. I'm sure Jordan will get into the schooling more next year.

Helen and I just love going to yard/garage sales (not to forget the occasional estate sale) on Saturdays. We get up early and leave around 7am. Sometimes we get something to eat at the Circle K starting out -- and we are off, looking up and down the streets for signs pointing us in the right direction. We never know what we'll find, but we do find some real treasures. Helen despairs when I see old tools, little or big bags (of any sort), or kitchen utensils.

Christmas went very well, Helen had painted the windows with her glass paints like she did in San Pedro -- with Christmas stuff.

In February 2001, after our landlord Ray had died, we decided to move back to Torrance, there we lived with dad till July 2002. While there, Helen's boys, Daniel and Jordan decided to move back to England to live with their dad.

Moving back to Torrance

As a family, we took a trip to visit my Mother. She was living in Rio Vista, which is such a nice little town, about 20 miles from Sacramento. We also visited Nancy, my first wife. Nancy has 5 girls, including Jenny who is about 21 years old.

Later that year, around Thanksgiving or so, we took a trip to Utah. There we visited Helen's sister Jane. We had a fantastic time and really enjoyed looking around Salt Lake City.

I would even say that we developed thoughts about moving there. There was lots of snow in Salt Lake, but we really got a good feeling about it all.



ADT Home Security Systems

Back in Torrance, I started selling ADT home security systems. Working for an ADT dealer, was not too hard at all. I had to go door-to-door and try and get in and make a presentation of the Home Security System. The customer just had to put down \$99 and make monthly payments. Some months were better than others, but \$500 - \$800 was the average week commission.

About a year later, I sought a job with ADT corporate. At the corporate office, things were so professional and huge. A huge building. Corporate also had all the benefits, and the pay was much higher. The commission rate increased, as we got more & more sales during the month.

The Move to Taylorsville, Utah

Using my skills of selling vacuums and ADT with a dealer, to, after two months, to achieve the highest commission rates. For the 6 months, prior to us leaving for Utah, I had averaged about \$12,000 a month. Totally unbelievable, we were doing well, very well.



Thinking that I could continue selling ADT even in Utah, we decided to move to Taylorsville, UT in July of 2002. Helen's sister, Jane, was living in Kaysville.

Isaac was now 11 months and Seth 23 months. Rob was now 16 and Sophie 13. The home was a duplex (rent \$700/mo), with two bedrooms and one bath. The house also had a basement, though unfinished, it was big, unfinished, and had a lot of potential.

I found myself spending lots of time downstairs building Rob's bedroom. This made three bedrooms now. Our plans included building a laundry room, a bedroom for the boys, a large bedroom for us, and a bathroom as well. There were walls to build and electrical wires to run.

Over the next few months I had built the small bedroom for the boys, which included a small nook under the stairs. Though the boys never did move down there, when Mom, and later Dad came to visit, they stayed in there. It was quiet and dark. As a matter of fact, Helen and I took turns staying down there, it was the only way to get the rest we needed. It was like an isolation chamber, totally quiet.

When mom came, we took her to downtown Salt Lake, where we went to Temple Square, saw the movie "Testaments" (real good). On one occasion, I took her to the First Presidency's Christmas Devotional -- this was held at the Conference Center.

Dad came for Christmas, it went so well, lots and lots of presents and Helen's traditional cooking.

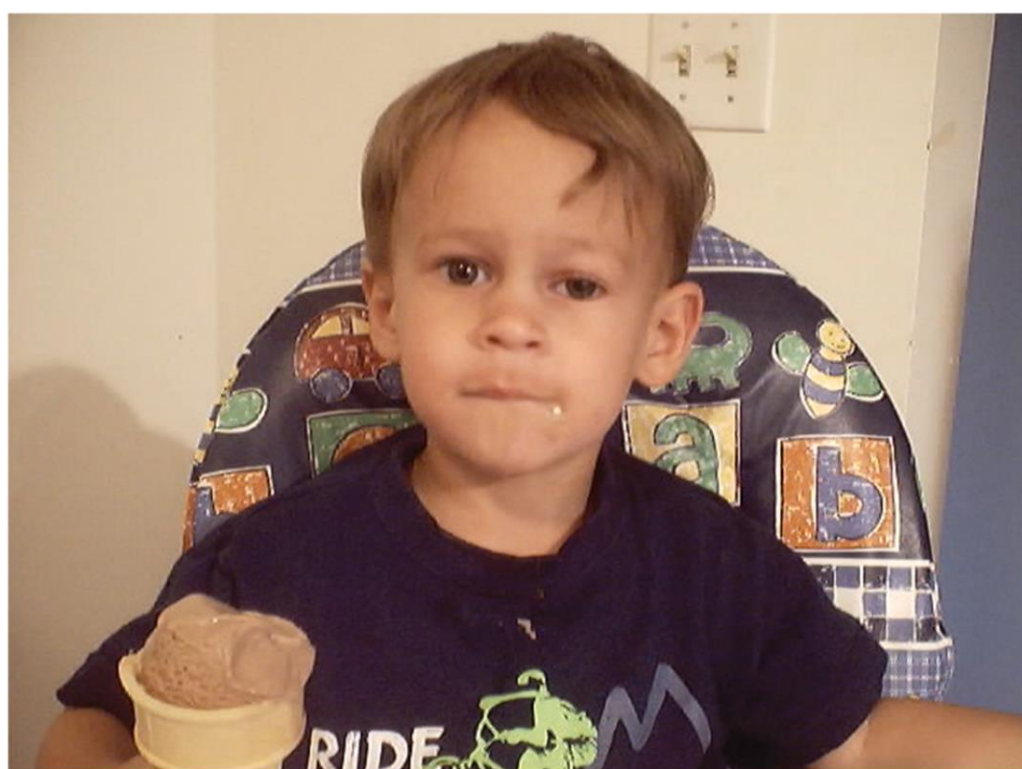
For Boxing Day, the day after, we had invited Uncle Dick & Aunt Gerry, and Aunt Linda -- it was so nice to see them. My cousin Britney, Linda's daughter, brought her little baby.



While in Taylorsville, Rob got his driver's license. He worked for Einstein's bagels on a part time basis. Needless to say, he was driving that truck (our '73 chevy) all over Taylorsville. Rob did alright in school, much better at the beginning, but got lazy towards the end.

Workwise, the home security systems were not selling, like they were in the heart of Los Angeles. Crime was big in Los Angeles, and in Utah, the perceived crime was not there.

I tried selling Kirby as well and even went door to door cleaning carpets. Money flow was low, and we were relying on the Church Welfare for our food. Though, we enjoyed the real butter, all the meat we wanted, and lots of other good stuff -- we knew we needed a change. Just before we left for Torrance to live, in preparation to moving to England, I filed my taxes for the year of 2003. I was to receive \$5,000 back from my taxes, but it turns out that the State of California nabbed that tax return. So I unwittingly paid some of my back AFDC arrears.



Move back to Torrance, before moving to England

We moved back to Torrance in March of 2003, our plans were to move to England. However, it turned out that because of my back AFDC arrears, my passport was being denied. When Robby was born, Nancy and I weren't married, so Nancy had to go on welfare. The State of California was now making me payback most of that money Nancy had received in those two years she received welfare.



So, I have to payoff the back arrears of \$32K (most of this amount is interest), before I could get my passport. Helen with the boys and Sophie did take off for England in mid March. They were able to find a small house in Kingskerswell, a small village in the county of Devon. Helen was about 4 months along with our third child, and last child. We were assuming the baby would be a boy. Though I wished at one point to have a little girl, it was not to be. I so loved my nieces, Mellissa and Jocelyn. I would spoil them at every chance I spent with them.

Rob moved back to live with his mother, though he enjoyed the freedom of driving the truck, he was not keeping his grades up. He needed more supervision and less freedom, otherwise he would not have graduated. At this point, I gave Dad the truck.

I concentrated on selling ADT home security systems. In my off time, I would send emails and place phone calls to various agencies in Sacramento and Washington D.C. who had to do with child support. I had to get my account cleared so that my passport would be realized and I could join my family in England.

After much many phone calls & emails, and some positive thinking, it happened – my passport was cleared, at least the State saw I had made a large payment, this of course my tax refund. I could now apply for a visa to stay in the UK.

Things happened to go my way – I was able to prove to the UK consultant that I wouldn't be a dependant on the State and that I could support me and my family. They accepted my paperwork and I was granted the visa. I now had the green light to book my flight to England and join my family.



MOVING TO ENGLAND

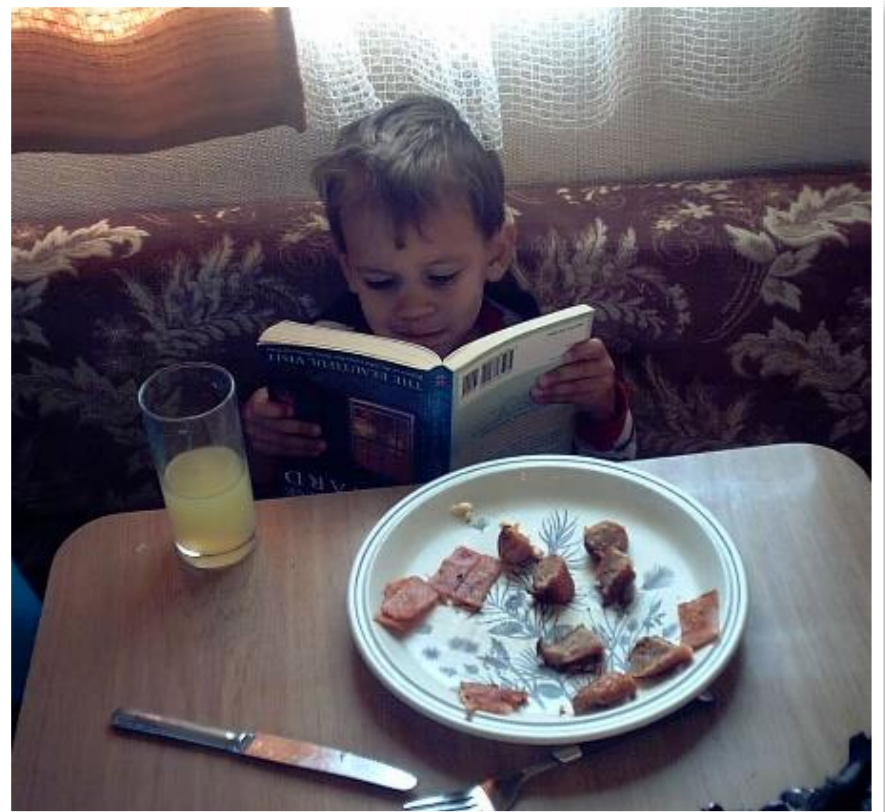
Kingskerswell, Devon

The baby was due towards the end of July – I was due to arrive on the 23rd of July. Sure enough, I did make it in time – Elijah was born on the 26th 2003. I was happy to be in England, I was happy to be with my family –

I don't know how things fell into place for me – in regards to by passport getting cleared and my visa application being approved, it was truly a miracle – my prayers were answered.



Soon afterwards, I had a health wellness check-up and everything was fine, but one night as Sophie wasn't doing the dishes properly, I blew up and lost my temper. I went up stairs, and soon experienced heart pains. It was a heart attack. I spent 5 days in hospital.

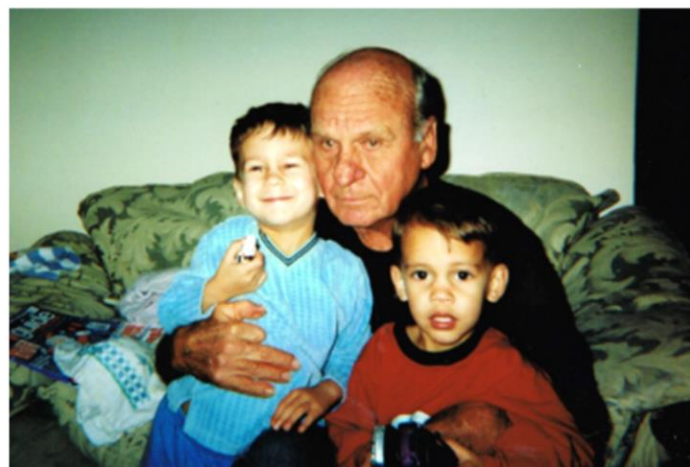
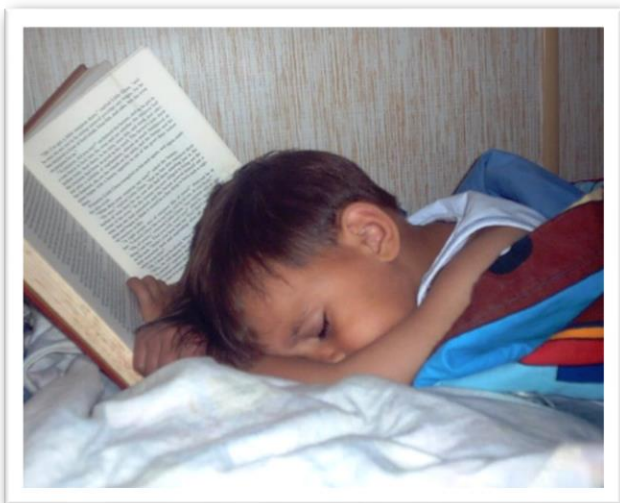


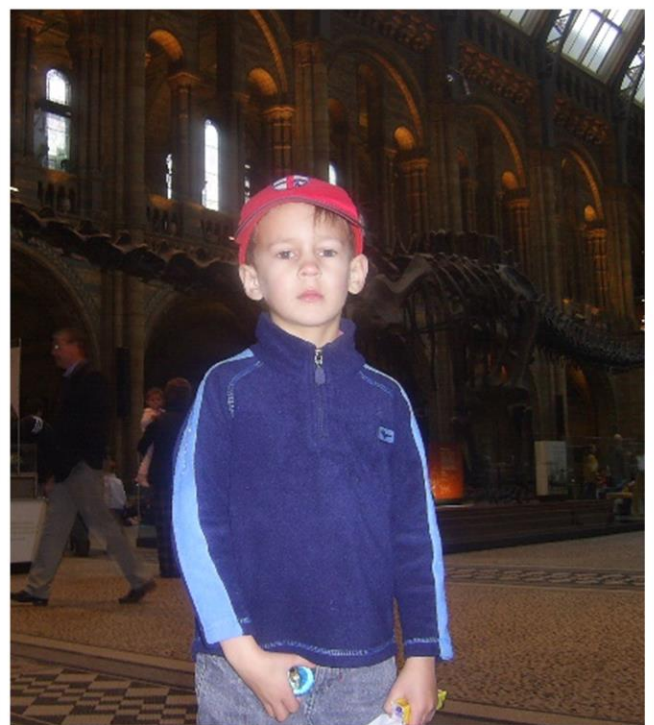
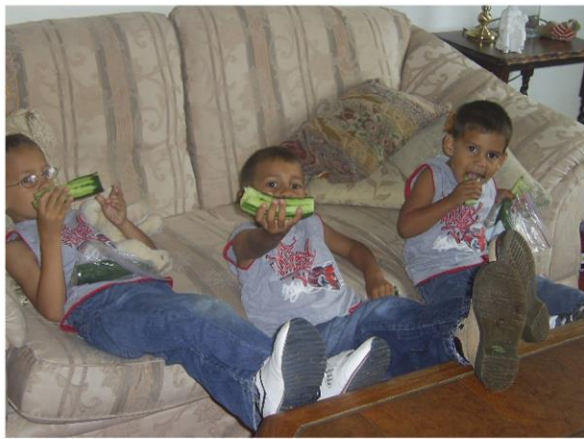
That heart attack happened the night before I was to start a job with British Gas Company. It has been 11 years now, and no other health problem. There has been the occasional bumps, bruises, splinters, nail in the foot, but otherwise fine. Oh, I did pass some kidney stones in 2014.

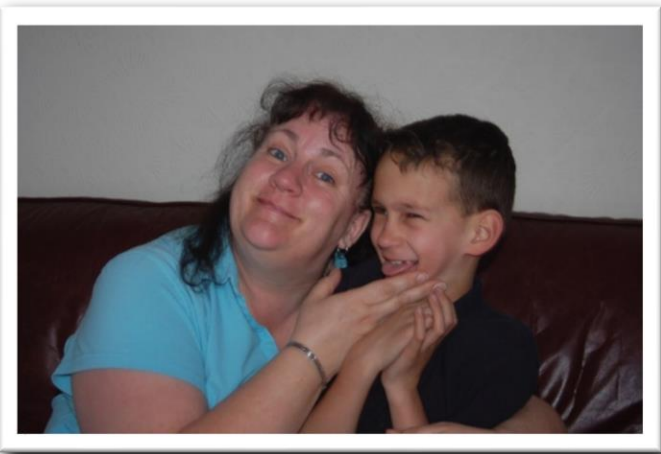
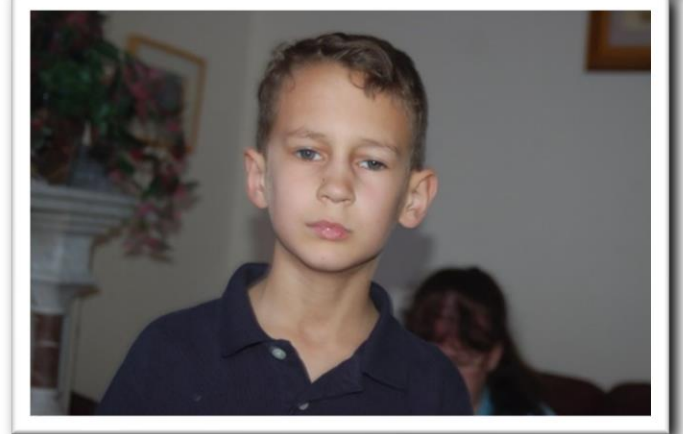
Let me say, the health care system is fantastic. We show no id whatsoever, we just give our name and birthdate to make sure the proper records are being looked at on the computer.



The Howard Gilbert Wood and Helen Euinton Family Appendix

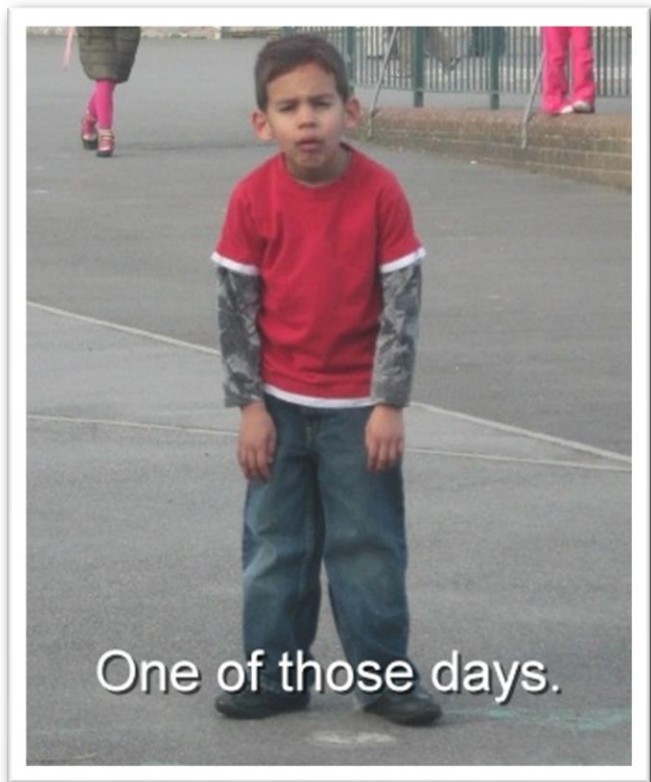
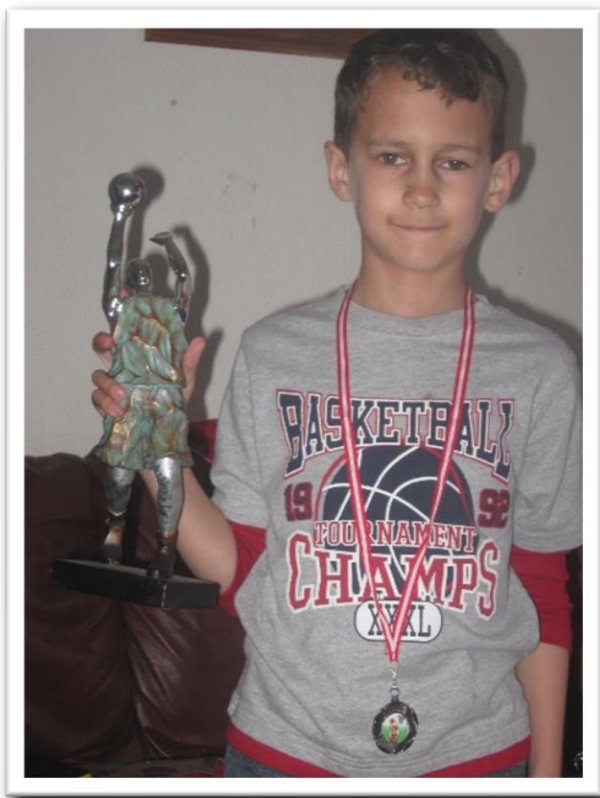




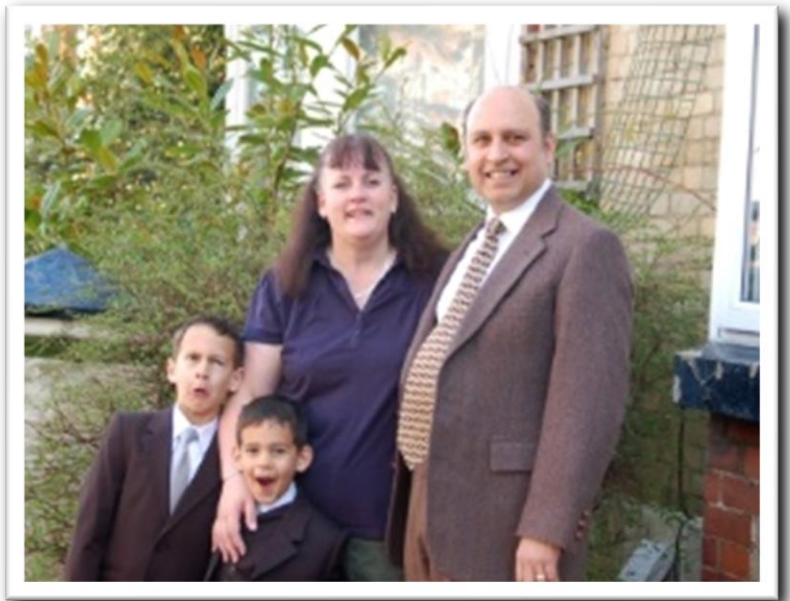


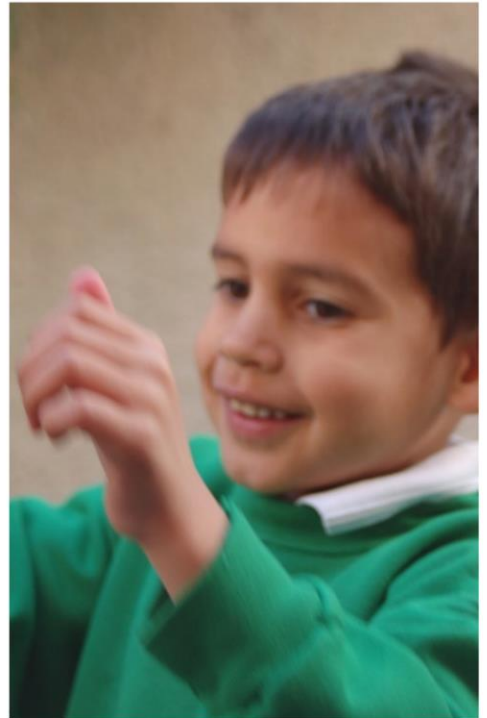


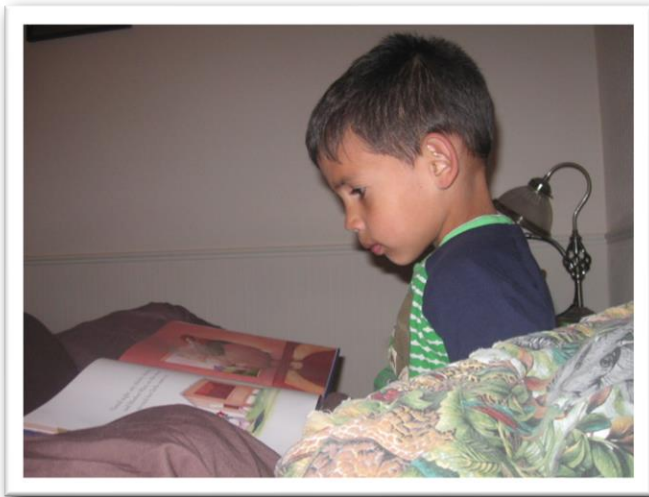
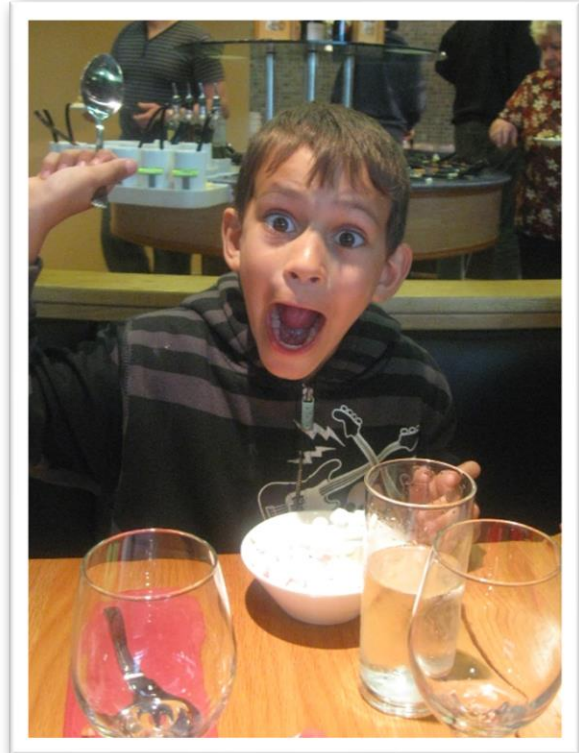
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One of those days.

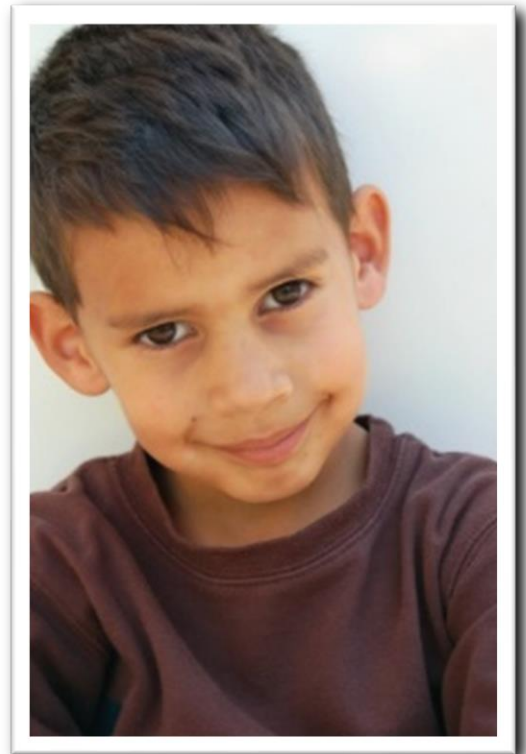


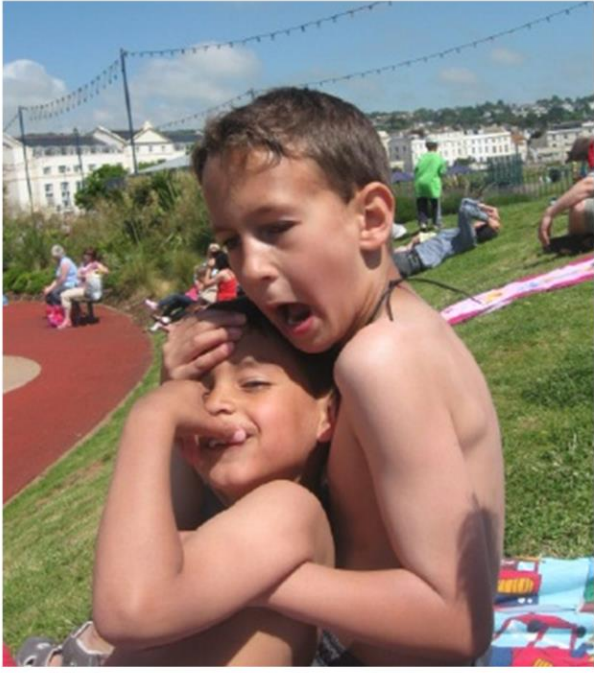




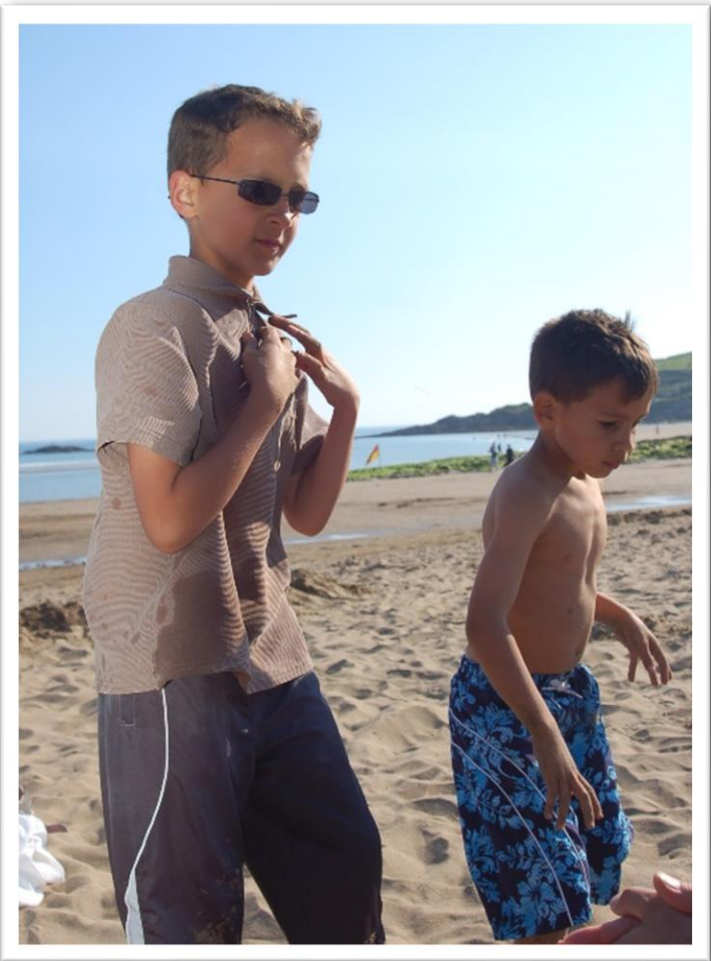
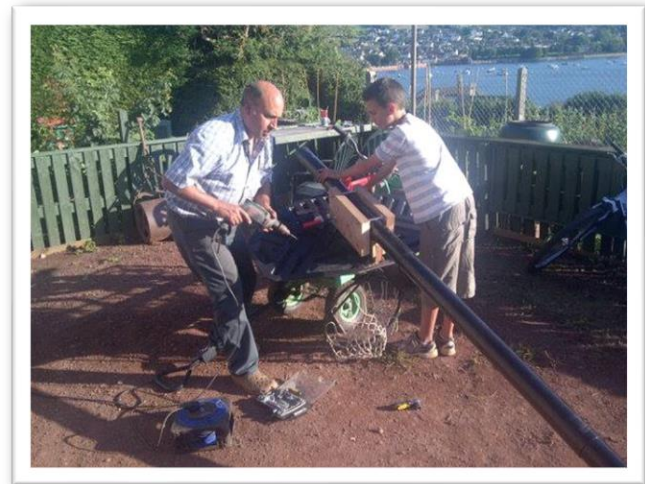




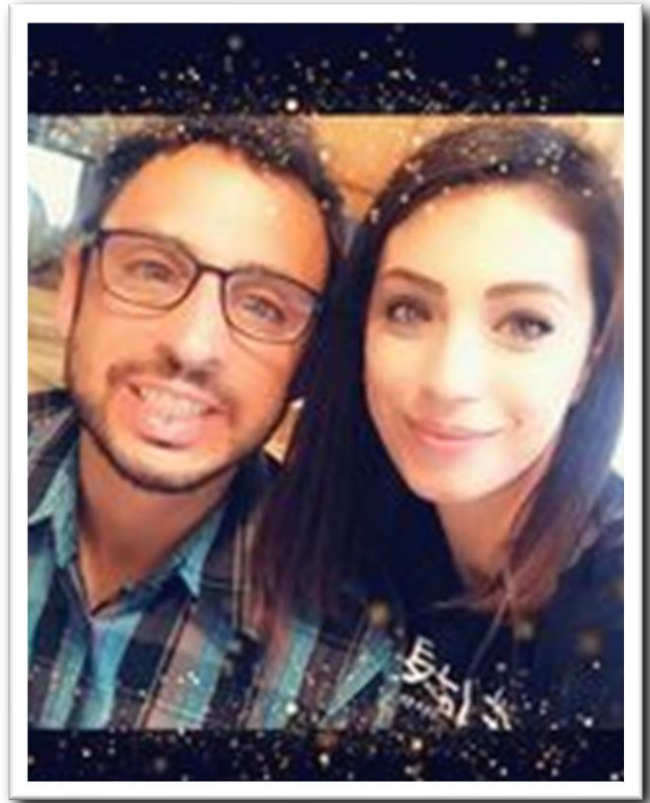
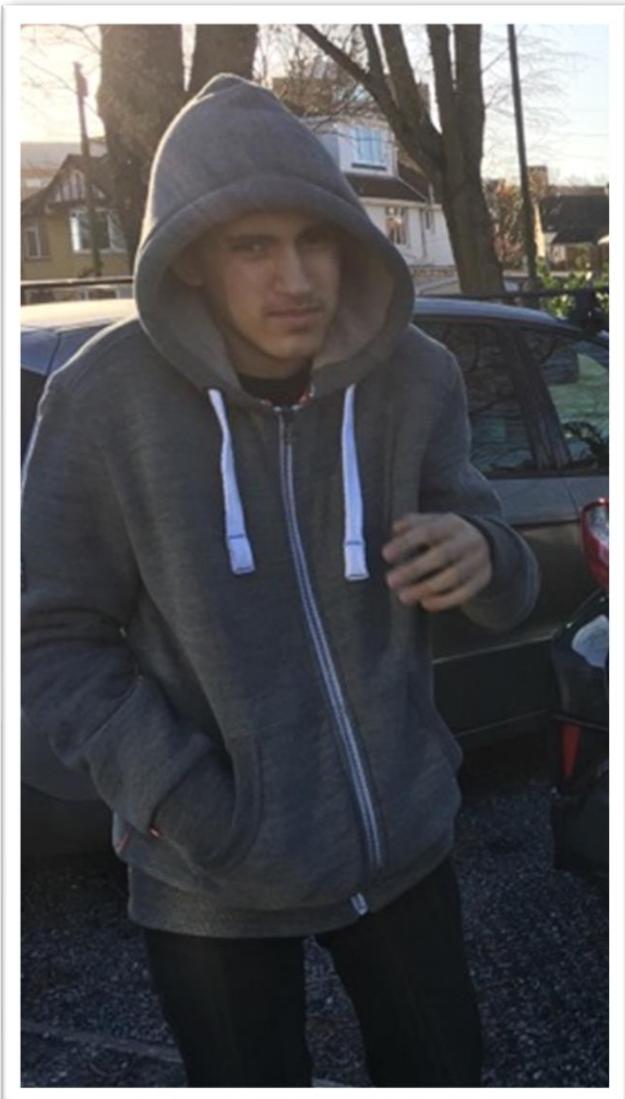
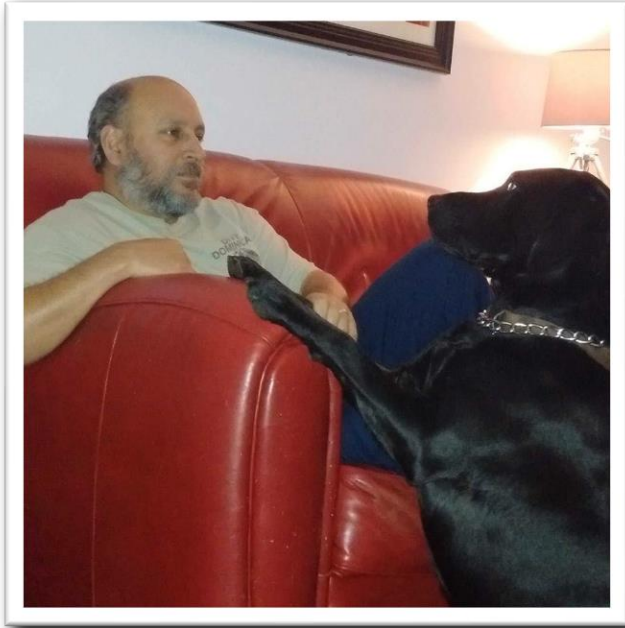












Helen Elizabeth Euinton (1962 - living)
Daughter of Henry Euinton & Jean Collins

Childhood

I was 3rd child in our family, born on my brothers 2nd birthday, 24th July 1962. Dad moved a lot with his work with Midland bank, we had lots of homes and as foster parents our homes were filled with many children!

I started school every early, we lived in a little village called Abbotskerswell, the teachers there allowed me to go to school with my siblings from 3 years old, I learned to read and write very early and have always loved to do both. Maths has always beaten me, I am hopeless, never enjoyed anything more than the very basics. (and have never needed more than that!)

I left school at 15 with 4 GCSE passes and 5 CSE passes , worked in a gift store for 2 years and then trained as an orthopaedic nurse at Mount Gould hospital in Plymouth Devon.

Adult Years

I left the hospital in 1981 at 19, and lived and worked in London as a maternity nanny. I would move into peoples' homes when they had their babies and help them to learn how to care for them. After about 8 weeks I would move in with another family and start all over again. I worked with one lovely family and looked after baby Orlando, I was so happy there that when they asked me to stay on and be Orlando's full time nanny I jumped at the chance. it was such a good experience, I met many people working with this family. While working in London I decided that I should further my nursing career, I attended an interview at a Bristol hospital , on the train journey, I met Kevin Hatfield.....8 months later we were married, no more nursing for me. He was in the British Army, we lived in several houses in England and Germany, had 3 children, Daniel, Jordan and Sophie. When Sophie was 10 weeks old, he decided that he didn't want to be married anymore and left. I was a single parent for 10 years, those were the hardest yet most satisfying and incredible years for me.

Meeting Howard & moving to the States

After 10 years of raising my children alone, I began to feel that the time was right to search again for a man to spend my life with. I had no idea where I should go or what I should do. A friend introduced me to LDS singles online. Against all my better judgement I signed up for one month, placed my profile and the same day I received an email from Howard Wood . I never contacted anyone else from that site! I met Howard in September 1999, in November I moved with my 3 children to the United States. We married on November 27th, Seth was conceived on our wedding night, Isaac conceived on our first anniversary! Isaac was born early and so these boys are 11 1/2 months apart!

Life for me was very hard in the states. Howard and I had some huge challenges, 4 teenagers and a new marriage, new babies and living with his family was TOO HARD! We lived in San Pedro california, Hemet, Torrance and Utah. Dan and Jordan were homesick, there was no room at Grandpa Wood's house, we had to send them back to England. I think when they left is when I hit my lowest times. A mother should never have to live so far away from her children.

When we lived in Taylorsville, Utah, I just knew that we had to move to the UK. The feeling was overwhelming, we had discussed this move before but couldn't see how it would be possible, Howard had no passport and with child support arrears for Rob, he had been refused a passport. Even knowing this, we both felt that moving to the UK was the only way that our marriage could work out.

Returning to England

I left the States in march 2003, 5 months pregnant with my 6th baby, our 3rd son together, I moved into a little house in Devon, with very little furniture and lots of hope for a bright future!

Miracles DO happen and proof that if you are guided and prompted to do something, no matter how impossible it might seem, obedience pays off. On July 23rd, the day before I went into hospital to have Elijah, Howard arrived from California! What a great time that was. Seth and Isaac were as happy as I was to see daddy. They could barely let him out of their sight for months.

Howard secured a job with British gas, things were looking great! The day he was due to leave for training, he had a heart attack. What a

shock, no-one saw that coming! He had had medical examinations just weeks before saying he was fit and healthy, his cholesterol was great, blood pressure great...but he had a whammy of a heart attack. He spent 5 days in the hospital, when he came home he was very weak, he developed Pericarditis, an inflammation of the sac surrounding the heart. He was ill for quite some time. The medication he has to take had some pretty horrible side effects, it took a few months to get them all adjusted so that he felt well again.

Grandpa Wood comes to visit every year, we love seeing him! Kara came last year and at last we have found our perfect home. We have a lovely big town house in Newton Abbot, lots of space, close to everything we need. Life is very good to us. In December of 2006 Howard and I were sealed, along with our little boys. Seth is of incredible intelligence, he is a master mind, quite eccentric in many ways (like his dad!!) Isaac didn't speak until he was 4 years old, he appeared to be incredibly shy (even with family members) he has an incredible memory and again exhibited some bizarre trends. When he was 4 he was diagnosed with aspergers syndrome, a form of autism. He has many fears and also has something called selective mutism. This means he is unable to speak when he is feeling very stressed, at school he usually mouths his words or whispers.

At the same time, both Seth and Howard were unofficially diagnosed with a milder form of the same syndrome....all those eccentricities and peculiarities had a reason! The high intelligence, ability to store information and facts, the need for order, routine, shyness, rigidity and brilliance had a name. Howard and Seth are affected very little, still able to function normally in the world (if a little difficult to live with at times!!!)

Things have a way of working out. Having had a heart attack and being unable to work because of illness and circumstance, both Howard and I are able to raise the boys together. We have the time and means to really concentrate on these amazing little boys. Elijah is completely unaffected by the genetics of autism, he is in every way a regular little boy. He is such fun...he reminds of a great deal of grandpa Wood. He is deliciously naughty, enormous fun, he is loved by everybody. He loves to dance.

Seth is very advanced at school, he reads like an adult, writes beautifully, is like his dad in his ability to remember facts and figures. He loves to learn, he has friends and excels at many things.

Isaac is also reading above average for his age. Hard to gauge just how well he reads when he can't speak out loud at school! We are often told that they know he has capabilities far beyond those that he shows.

We are so blessed that we have so much help for Isaac, he has extra help at school. We are thrilled with how the teachers care for him. We see great improvements with him all the time. Unfortunately, every time things change, when there is a break in school for half term, school holidays etc it seems we go backwards. He has to start all over again with the fears of being away from us, his speech goes backwards and we all start over again! He is an incredible little boy. So loving and kind. He and Eli are 'best friends' it is so touching to see how they interact.

Life is very good here. Howard and I enjoy being able to spend time with the boys, Jordan and Sophie still live at home with us, Jordan is a chef (unfortunately he never cooks here) Sophie is at college studying health and beauty. Daniel lives 100 miles away and is a deputy manager for a beautiful Hotel, this is a temporary job, he is manager of a restaurant which is being refurbished. When the restaurant is open again he will return there. He is also a special constable for the police.

Life is busy, loud and for the most part happy.

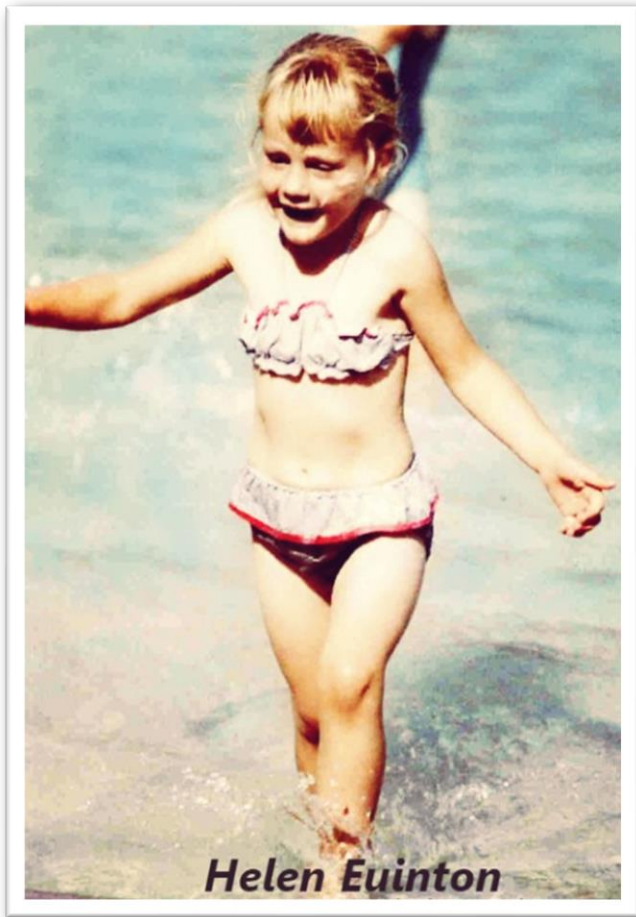
UPDATE. August 13th 2007.

Jordan and Sophie have now flown the nest and moved. Jordan has a flat in the town with his girlfriend, Mel, Sophie now lives and works for Daniel in Bath, she lives in the hotel and works there too.

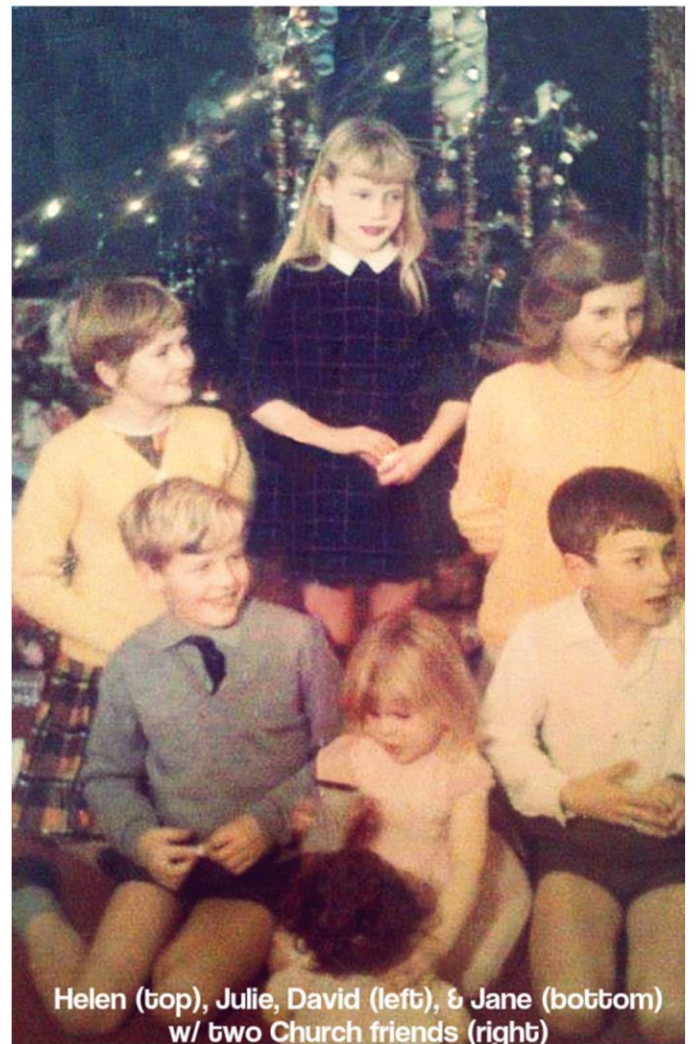
Our family is experiencing some excitement! Our dream home was sold and we moved into a fantastic converted barn, with an acre of land. 12 days after we moved in here that house sold too, it has been empty for 3 years!! The estate agents say we are like a lucky charm and want us to move into all their empty homes so that they sell! We are about to move again, twice. We have a temporary home for 3 months and then a long term let from November. I hate moving house!

Update June 2008

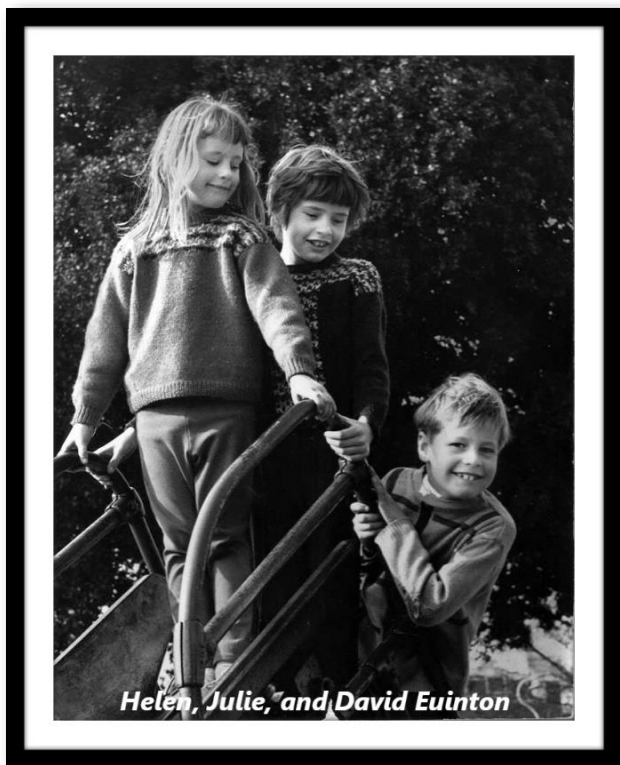
Howard, the boys and I spent 3 great weeks in California in December, we had a wonderful time and came home in time to move house yet again, now we are settled in a lovely townhouse right in the heart of Newton Abbot, Jordan and Mel have a lovely house right down the street from us and on Saturday June 7th (06-07-08) at 10.10pm their first baby was born. Joshua Alec Hatfield was born weighing in at 7lbs 9.5 oz, he has blond hair and blue eyes. I witnessed his birth and must say it was the most incredible experience, drug free and miraculous. I will never forget seeing my grandson enter this world!



Helen Euinton



*Helen (top), Julie, David (left), & Jane (bottom)
w/ two Church friends (right)*



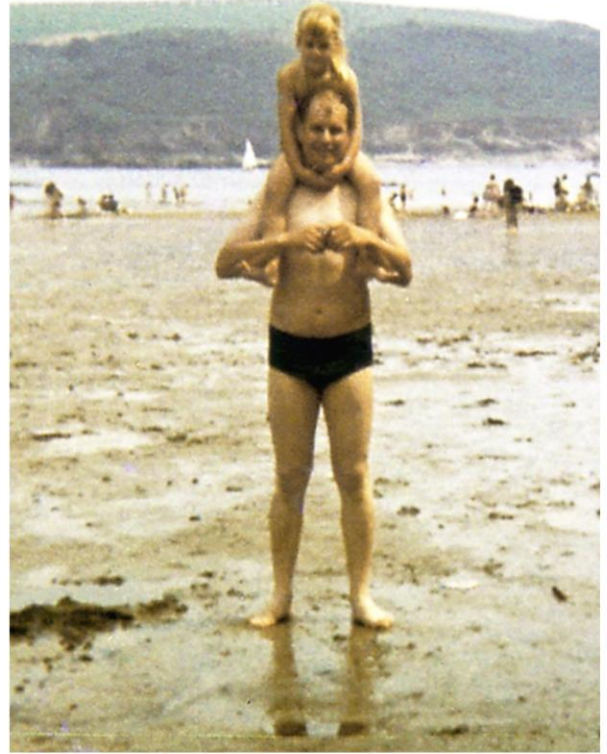
Helen, Julie, and David Euinton



Helen Euinton



Jean Margaret Collins



Roger at Jarodale
24th September
2000.



Helen & Julie



Helen Euinton



Helen Euinton



Helen Euinton



Helen Euinton